SPECIAL ISSUE: Complete Guide to the I-Way

SEPTEMBER 1994

PC Computing

Doing Business on the Internet and Beyond

How to get the **e-mail** edge, instantly spot key **trends,** and find world-class **freebies.**

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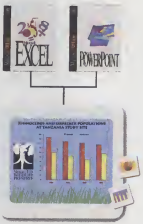
*See your local NEC dealer for details or call NEC FastFacts™ at 1-800-366-0476 and request document #24 for a copy of the rebate redemption form.

IN THE MICROSOFT OFFI
DON'T JUST COHABIT, THEY FOR

You might say we simply borrowed the idea from nature. Programs that live in the same place should work together.

Consider what you have to do in a single week. Letters. Memos. Reports. Spreadsheets. Charts. Graphs. Presentations.

Wouldn't it be great if there were a product that could help you pull it all together?



Create powerful presentations easily with information from different programs. Suddenly, you're a whiz presenter.

In a nutshell, that's the whole idea behind the Microsoft* Office. Now all your programs can work together like one.

Thanks to our intuitive OfficeLinks tools, it's easier than ever to share text, data and graphics seamlessly between our best-selling programs.

What's this really mean?

Simply, you'll be able to get more done. With a lot less effort.

Say you're working on your sales report. You'll probably start by writing in Microsoft Word.

*Support for Microsoft Office is no-charge, however, normal telephone company charges. Microsoft Excel, Word, the PowerPoint presentation graphics program, the Microsoft and Canada, call your local Microsoft subsidiary or (206) 936-8661. Customers who are Microsoft Corporation.

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Then you click to open your Microsoft Access® database and call up your sales data. By client. By vendor. By salesperson. By region. By month.

But why stop there?

You can easily send that data to a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet in just a click of a button, analyze it, turn it into a dramatic chart, and drop it all back into your Word document.

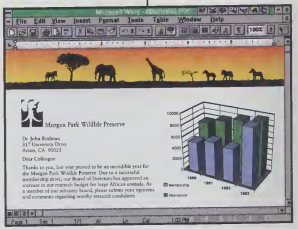
It's like one big technological swap fest. The end benefit being, that now you can spend more time concentrating on your work, instead of on your software.

Naturally, you'll want to share your handiwork with the regional managers.

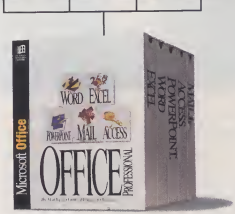
Just a couple of clicks later, you've created personalized letters for each one of them from within Microsoft Word.

Brilliant.

Now for the finishing touch. Click a button and transform everything into an eye-popping PowerPoint® presentation. Call it a "career-enhancing" move.



It's easy to update or manage text, data and graphics in one document with the latest object linking and embedding technology (OLE 2.0). Just click where you need to work and the tools you need are right there.



And while we're on the subject of relationships, we should mention the Microsoft Office is the only product of its kind that offers you unlimited product support with no service charge.*

Clearly, the Microsoft Office with OfficeLinks marks a quantum shift in what software enables you to achieve. And it's a clear indication of where the future is heading.

To find out the rest of the story (a small sample of which we've covered here), visit your retailer or call (800) 894-6642, Department VAC, for your Office Information Kit.

With the Microsoft Office, you'll not only improve the relationship between your programs, the same will go for you and your computer.

Microsoft Office

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These days, all it takes is a little success to overload your business. The more you demand of your computers, the slower things can get. Well, that's because PCs are made to be PCs. And at this point, what you really need is a server — the most efficient way to get your PCs working together.

So we'd like to introduce you to the Compaq ProSignia VS. Now, for the price of a desktop, you can get a real, industrial-strength server made by the company who knows the technology best. (Compaq is recognized as the world leader in servers.*)

Unlike a PC, the ProSignia VS is specifically designed for the job of powering a computer network in small- to medium-sized businesses. It's optimized for high-speed file transfers, to eliminate the finger-tapping during everyday tasks, like calling up a customer record to take an order. It also expands easily to

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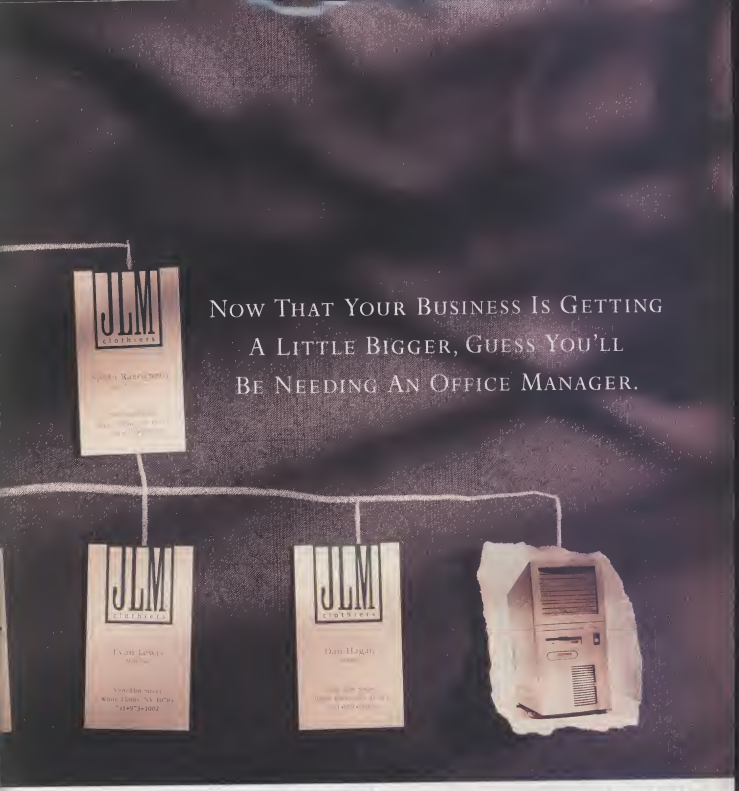

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provide vast, centralized storage as your business grows larger.

And while most servers are complicated, the ProSignia VS can make your life easier. Our optional CD-based SmartStart simplifies the whole process of setting up a reliable system. And Insight Manager (also an option) keeps an eye on key parts, pinpointing problems *before* they can disrupt operations.

Of course, the ProSignia VS also provides the security of Compaq's three-year on-site warranty** and 24-hour support line.

To find out how you can give your company more agility as it grows, visit an authorized Compaq reseller. If you'd like more information, or if you'd like the name of your nearest reseller, call us at 1-800-638-8258, ext. 450. We can show you the best kind of office manager: One that works as hard as you do.

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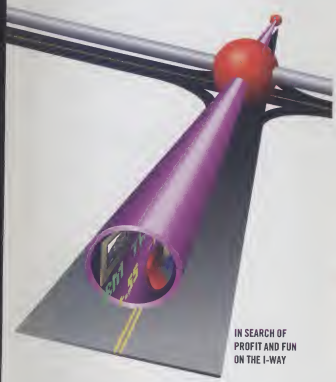
Going I-Way?

How do you succeed in business in the 1990s? Two words: Information Superhighway. To help you master the road, our Special Report tells you what to look for, where to find it, and how to get there. **120**



IN SEARCH OF PROFIT AND FUN ON THE I-WAY

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Virus, They Wrote

Meet your worst enemies. They shrug it off when their viruses destroy your data. Want to avoid them? Just ask. We did. And they told all. **206**

FAR LEFT PHOTOGRAPH BY STAN MUSILEK. LEFT PHOTOGRAPH BY AMY GUIP

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Technolust Data, data everywhere, and not a thought to think. Don't drown in information, these tools won't let you sink. **346**

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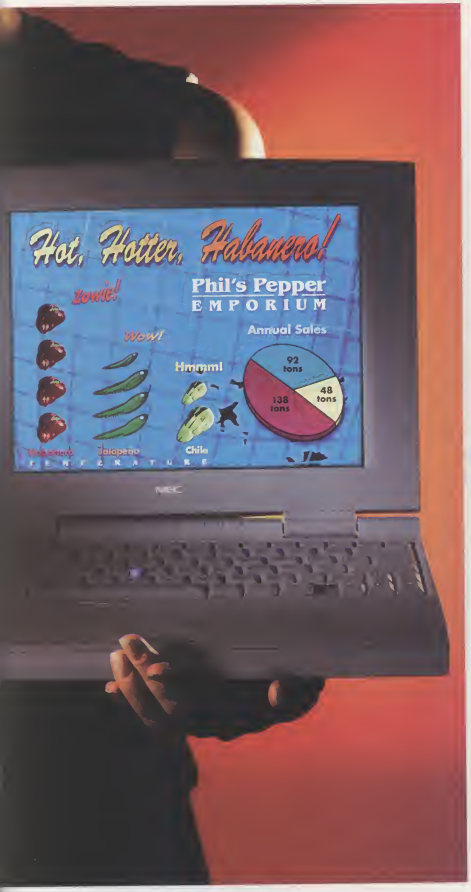

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information, call 1-800-NEC-VERSA or visit an authorized dealer. The Versa S notebook. It's got the kind of powerful kick that would impress even Mother Nature.

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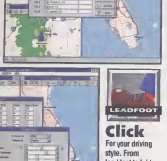

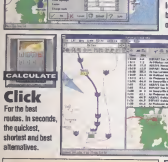

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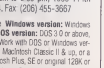

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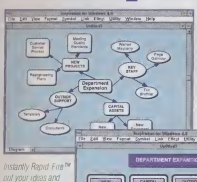

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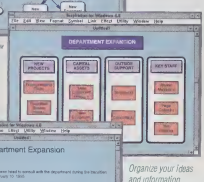

Organize your ideas and information easily into tree charts and presentation visuals in the Diagram view

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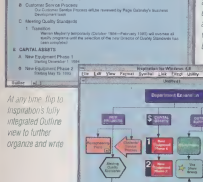

At any time, flip to Inspiration's fully integrated Outline view to further organize and write

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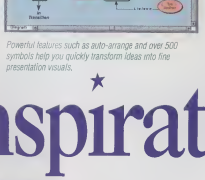

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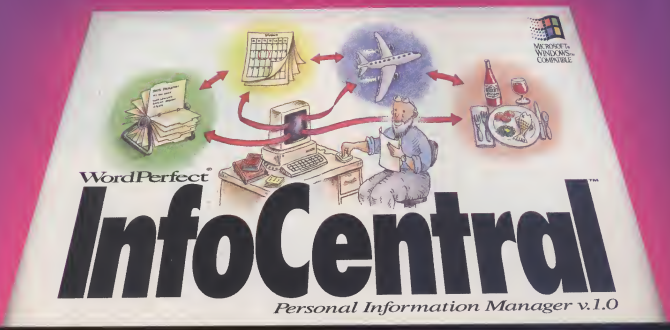

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Paradox for Windows - [WorldOptics Order Entry System]

File Edit View Form Record Properties Tools Window Help

Customer

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Telephone: +44-71-123456

Company Name: The Camera Shop

WORLD OPTICS

Order

Order No	Date	Total Amount
2199	1-Jul-94	2,723.00
2286	12-Jul-94	1,235.23
2350	3-Aug-94	1,913.55

Status:
- In Stock
- Back Ordered
- Discontinued

Ship via: Two day

Ordered by: Telephone

PO No.: M1209

Camera

Qty	Unit Price	Total Price
2	1,195.00	2,390.00

Filters

Qty	Unit Price	Total Price
2	19.00	38.00

Video Camera

Qty	Unit Price	Total Price
1	1,565.00	1,565.00

Print Invoice

Upload Orders

Microsoft Word - FETTERS.DOC

File Edit View Table Record Properties Window Help

Andrew H. Brown
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WORLD OPTICS

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CUSTOMER	Company Name	Address	City	Postal Code
1	The Camera Shop	1022 High Street	London, England	SW1 1HQ
2	Vitrum	36 rue du Temple	Paris, France	75004
3	Cavagnari & Co.	Avenida Paulista, 1000	Sao Paulo, Brazil	13035

Thank you for your cooperation. We look forward to working with you in the future.

Sincerely,

▲ *Paradox for Windows has superior integration with Perfect Office and Microsoft Office applications. Thanks to OLE 2.0, you can place a "live" Paradox table into a Microsoft Word or WordPerfect document and edit the data in place. (Access 2.0 cannot do that.)*

February 1994 — November 1993 — June 1994

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Office integration outshines Access

Full client and server support for OLE 2.0 and DDE make Paradox the best database for use with other applications including Perfect Office and Microsoft Office. For example, you can place a "live" Paradox table in a Word document, edit the table in place, and your changes are automatically updated *(Access can't do this)*. And Paradox gives you record level locking, that provides enhanced productivity in multiuser environments. *(Access locks up your whole page!)*

Want to increase your workgroup productivity? Paradox's built-in Workgroup Desktop and new Mail Enablement make it easy to publish and subscribe the latest data, using your existing network or e-mail system. This makes it simple to get weekly or monthly updates like sales and expense information.

Comparison Facts

End-user Features	Paradox 5.0	Access 2.0
Built-in computer-based training	✓	
Experts/Wizards to guide you step-by-step	✓	✓
Integrated graphics	✓	
Built-in workgroup and mail capabilities	✓	
Quick Filters without query process	✓	
Power-user/Client/server Features		
OLE 2.0 client and server support	✓	
Compatibility with applications from previous version	✓	
Visual Data Model Designer	✓	
Transparent connectivity and scalability with database aliases	✓	
Record level locking	✓	
Full range of data types, including Time, Graphic and Autoincrement	✓	
Graphical Integrated Development Environment (IDE)	✓	
ODBC-compliant	✓	✓
Dedicated high-performance native SQL drivers	✓	

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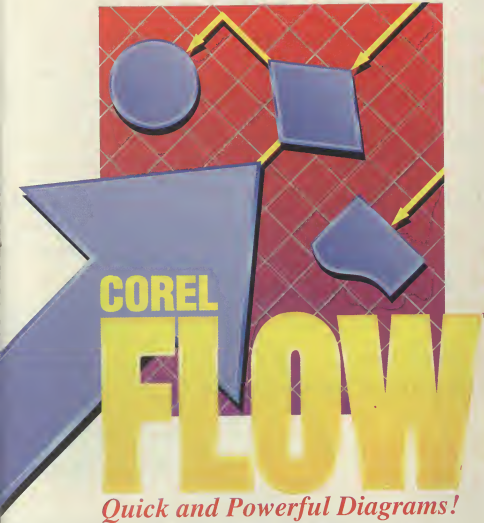

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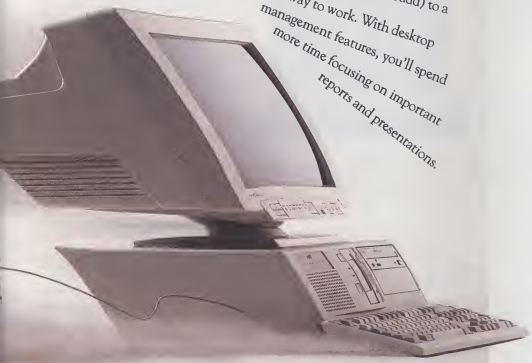

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OS/2 TO CHICAGO: STRANGELY FAMILIAR

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I'm so excited! I can't wait for Chicago to come out. Imagine all the things Chicago will offer: true multitasking, 32-bit graphics, the capability to configure each DOS application separately, no more 64K system resource heap, and long filenames. I can't stand this excitement. A friend told me more than two years ago that OS/2 offered all of this and more, and I told him he's a fool. If OS/2 offered all this, *PC Computing* would have written numerous features on it and had it prominently displayed on two of its covers before it was even released.

ROB JOHNSON, RJOHNSON@GCO.COM

Living Up to Its Name

Your special Best 200 June issue (page 104) was one of the most informative features I've ever read, and it couldn't have arrived at a better time. The most valuable data in your system and video reviews is the Winstone performance scores. Your new Pulse section is excellent—keep the beat going. The Radar scope is intriguing and the Help section is much more helpful.

ANTHONY F. NAVARRO
ANAVARRO@PIPELINE.COM

Mr. White's New Neighborhood

I had barely finished shaking out the loose subscription renewal cards from my June issue when I noticed that *PC Computing* was sporting a new look. The colorful headers on the articles are a nice touch. It was also good to see Ron White's column near the back of the issue—now I can get there without all that nasty page flipping.

JEFF ALLISON
JEFF@INNOSOFT.COM

Postliterate Clown Mauling

Evidently you felt the need to pander to the postliterate generation by going for garish typography and shopping-mall page layout. Your columnists should dress up in clown outfits and makeup so their photographs will match their pages.

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DANSVILLE, NEW YORK

Listening to Roger Rabbit

Your special June issue sure was *special*. I felt like I was in Toontown, where all was frantic, wild, and wacky, and your entire staff had become used-car salespeople on Prozac, wearing big, yellow, smiling faces.

ROGER ROTHENBERGER
HAMILTON, GEORGIA

PROZAC OR JUST PLAIN PASSION? It wasn't just the June issue; check out the editors' photos in this issue, too. By the way, want to buy an Edsel? ML

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Copywriter

With your June issue, you've turned your editors into ad copywriters and all of your features into advertisements. Certainly there's enough hype and overly cute copy in your ads so that you don't need to carry it over into the editorial material. It's information overload—too jazzy and boring.

MILTON S. SNITZER
FLORAL PARK, NEW YORK

Virus Strikes: No Cure in Sight

Please tell me that *PC Computing* has just been hit by the *Entertainment Weekly* virus and that everything will be back to normal with the format of your fine publication.

CHRIS KLACZYK
ROCHESTER, NEW YORK

Out of the Box and into Your Heart

Wow! A magazine redesign that's a real improvement right out of the box. Kudos, and thanks!

STEVE MARSTON
GLEN OAKS, NEW YORK

Brave New Look

I like your new look—it's much more attention-grabbing and well-organized. Imagine: a magazine that's both fun and informative. What will you think of next, going to work without a tie? I'm sure you'll receive whine-a-grams from DOSaholics, nerds, suits, and other humor-impaired individuals, but never mind. Just refer them to the nearest tar pit. The future is ours!

HOWARD ROSS NEMEROV
SAN ANSELMO, CALIFORNIA

Today 200, Tomorrow 220?

I eagerly awaited your special June Best 200 issue, but was disappointed when I discovered that there were no comparisons for dot-matrix and ink jet printers. I realize that most businesses use laser printers, but there are still some of us who have to settle for less expensive printing solutions. I wouldn't have minded if you had to change the name of your guide to the Best 220 in order to include some other categories.

DON STOLIKER, JR.
PROVO, UTAH

Loss of (Cost) Consciousness?

Your Best 200 reviews of laser printers were based on everything except operating costs. I want to know about the cost of toner cartridges, the number of pages I can

HIGH-RESOLUTION LASER QUALITY PRINTING IS NO LONGER HIGH PRICED PRINTING. INTRODUCING THE OKIDATA 400e-SERIES.

If you thought that outstanding clarity and detail were only possible with a premium-priced laser printer, take a close look at the new OL410e. Now you can produce the same superb output you see here for a lot less. The OL410e is an easy-to-use 600 dpi-class output printer with 4 pages-per-minute speed, at a price well below typical 600 dpi lasers. With the OL410e, any PC user can look *Fortune 500*® on a home office budget.

Okidata also offers standout 300 dpi resolution with *PC Magazine's* Editors' Choice winning OL400e. The experts said, "...if you want laser quality, you won't find a better bargain." Both models support Okidata's tradition of reliability with an unsurpassed 5-year LED printhead warranty.

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OL410e

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Okidata, Reg. T.M., M.D. Oki Electric Industry Co., Ltd. "Never Business Has Never Looked Better" T.M. Oki America, Inc.

print from a cartridge, and whether the printer requires separate toner and developer cartridges.

W. Drew Fentress
Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania

WHILE THE BEST 200 focused on performance testing, all of our reviews concentrated on product return on investment, especially printer reviews, where consumables are always a factor. **HB**

Proof's in the Printing

In the 4-ppm laser printer category of June's Best 200, you gave Epson's ActionLaser 1500 a perfect 10 for output quality and Hewlett-Packard's LaserJet 4L a mere 7.9. Are these the same two printers I saw three months ago when I was looking for a laser printer? I don't think so. The ActionLaser was typical 300-dpi quality, with the usual slight edge ragged ness, while the LaserJet gave cleaner and sharper edges than any other 300-dpi printer I've seen. Are you sure you didn't get a defective unit?

K.A. Boriskin
Bellingham, Massachusetts

EVALUATING OUTPUT was a key part of our printer testing for the Best 200. On our test documents—which consisted of graphics and text—the ActionLaser 1500 consistently had sharper output, especially when printing graphics. It was the clear leader. **SR**

Pssst! Wanna Buy a 750C?

Your review of color notebooks ("Top-Tier Totables: You Can Have It All," June, New! page 130) failed to mention that IBM's 750C is a rare commodity. I've placed several new orders for the 750C, but to no avail. In my experience, IBM's supply simply can't meet the demand.

John Ehlers
Goleta, California

IBM'S NOT ALONE. Active-matrix color displays are in short supply the world over—especially at 10.4 inches (IBM's unique size). For what it's worth, the new ThinkPads (the 755C and 360C) also come in passive-matrix flavor, for the truly impatient. **RS**

Dripping with Technojargon

Paul Somerson's selection of adjectives for Dell's Dimension XPS P90 (June, page 151) is curious—retina-rippling graphics, rock-solid construction, sexy styling. What's he using this system for?

M.P.
Belmont, California

COMING UP with snappy, rock-solid adjectives for hardware reviews. **PS**

32-Bit Salute

Your June Stacker 4.0 review ("Double Your Data, Double Your Fun," New! page 74) left out an important fact: Stacker is not compatible with Windows for Workgroups' 32-bit access. Most new systems shipping these days come with Windows for Workgroups 3.11. Because Windows has evolved into Windows for Workgroups 3.11, wouldn't it be prudent to begin testing software on it?

Kevin Krieger
Peru, Illinois

TRUTH BE TOLD, Stacker 4.0—and a passel of other disk-level utilities—have had problems with Windows for Workgroups' 32-bit *file* access, but we uncovered no problems with 32-bit *disk* access. Our apologies for any confusion this omission caused. **ML**

Contacts to the Max

Your review of GoldMine vs. Maximizer ("Keep Your Contacts in Place," June, New! page 86) did not give Maximizer a thorough evaluation. Statements such as, "Goldmine is fast. It leaves the competition . . . in the dust," need clarification. What is the benchmark? How many records were in the test database? Fast doing what—searching for a certain record, resorting the database, or accomplishing a complicated data query on various fields? Also, data in the Expense windows is related to personal expenses and not the client, as the review states.

Maximizer has unlimited user-defined fields, and although the user can't see more than six fields in a client window, do you really need to constantly look at the client's address? With Maximizer, the user designs

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what to see and what not to see. Plus, Maximizer has built-in, field-by-field data exchange, as the reconciliation of remote databases is highly important to the remote user. Maximizer works well, protects data, and has been proven in the field by tens of thousands of users as a solid product.

MIKE GOODE
SALES DIRECTOR, MODATECH SYSTEMS

DOS: Out in the Cold

In your glowing review of Hewlett-Packard's new DeskJet 560C ("Practically Perfect Printing," June, New! page 58), you fail to mention that HP's ColorSmart system is Windows-only, and that DOS users are left out in the cold. The review rates the 560C as a great buy, but as someone who uses WordPerfect 6.0 for DOS, it doesn't do me much good to rush out and buy a printer I can't use. Remember, there are still a few DOS applications and DOS users out here.

DANA HARKNETT
COMPUSERVE 71450,62

INDEED, HP's ColorSmart system is a boon only to Windows users, which makes the DeskJet 560C less attractive if you're running only DOS. **KC**

Hack E-Mail, Lose Job

Penn Jillette's column on e-mail privacy and Tonya Harding ("Remember Tonya?" June, page 366) was very well presented, and I agree: The reporters who hacked into Harding's e-mail should lose their jobs.

GARY DILLMAN
LEEDIL@NETCOM.COM

Constitutional Contradiction

I'm scared to admit that I agree with Penn Jillette's June column. The reporters who hacked Tonya's e-mail should have the book thrown at them. I bet they're like most reporters, who valiantly defend our Constitutional freedom of the press. Yet they hypocritically trample, without shame, an individual's Constitutional right to privacy.

FRANK SHAW
COMPUSERVE 72722,102

Correction

In June's Best 200 feature we incorrectly described Colorado Memory Systems' Jumbo Trakker 250. The product does include the option to restore files to directories other than the original directory. This function is called Restore redirect and is easily configurable.

SEND YOUR THOUGHTS TO Mail, *PC Computing*, 950 Tower Lane, 19th Floor, Foster City, CA 94404; fax us at (415) 578-7029; contact us via the Internet (76000.21@compuserve.com) or CompuServe (76000,21); or log on to PC Contact to post a public message (see page 250 for instructions). Letters must be signed and include a daytime phone number. If you contact us through e-mail, please include your phone number, city, state, and authorization to print your e-mail address. All letters become the property of *PC Computing* and will be edited for length and clarity.

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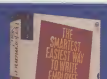

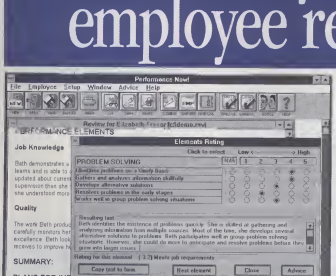

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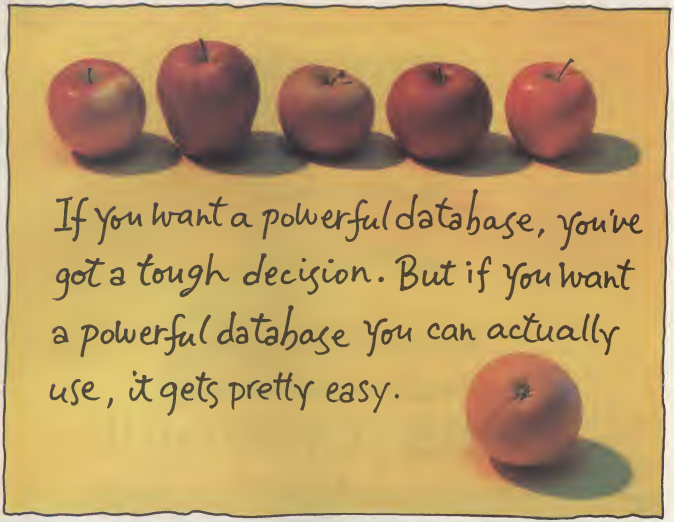

What's the difference between apples and oranges? In this case, it's the difference between powerful features and powerful features you can actually use.

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LOTUS NOTES READY

Now you don't have to be a programmer, or even think like one, to build a relational database that brings real efficiency to your work. With the new Approach® 3.0, demanding functions like tracking sales, managing projects, taking orders, invoicing,

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managing contacts and analyzing and reporting data are surprisingly simple.

Over 200 new usability and power features will take even the most overworked skeptic to productive database-user-for-life in two hours.* Don't doubt it. There's a good reason why Approach is the fastest-growing database in the business.

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Lotus Approach is the only database with PowerClick™ reporting, letting you see and alter reports as you build them. Just click on the intuitive SmartIcons® to organize and calculate data. And, the friendly on-line Assistants help to design reports, forms, mailings, analyses and more. Compared to Microsoft Access,® well there's no comparison. As *Infoworld* recently commented, "Approach (3.0) looks like a better choice than Microsoft Access (2.0): easier to use, yet still fast and powerful."††

And Approach 3.0 extends the power of Lotus 1-2-3 allowing you to create intelligent forms, PowerClick reports, mailing labels, and dynamic cross-tabs on your worksheet without ever leaving 1-2-3.

Approach X10™ query technology delivers blazing speed in organizing, analyzing and manipulating databases. And, Approach provides the highest performance connectivity to virtually any database, from dBase® to Access, to Lotus Notes® and more. Plus Approach includes a powerful new macro capability for sophisticated application development.

And its advanced integration with Lotus Notes, the leading groupware application, makes it the obvious choice for people who work together in groups.

Only Lotus Approach 3.0 gives you:

PowerClick reportwriter (for WYSIWYG design)

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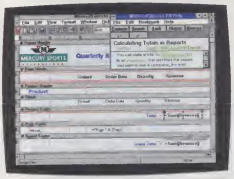
PowerKey™ technology (for direct access to existing data)

Lotus 1-2-3 Integration (for working with 1-2-3)

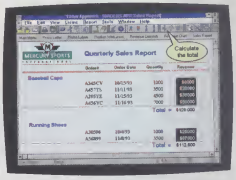
Lotus Notes Integration (for reporting on Notes data)

X10 speed architecture (for blazing speed)

Dynamic crosstabs (for drag and drop analysis)



Constructing a report in Access? "Easy"?



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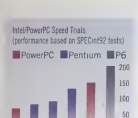
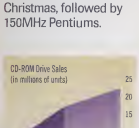
Pulse

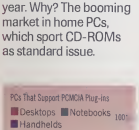
Microsoft's Take on Notes, High-Cost RAM, Low-Cost



Speed Thrills: For now, 100MHz Pentiums are the fastest processors, but expect RISC PowerPC 604 before Christmas, followed by 150MHz Pentiums.



Home Explosion: Sales of CD-ROM drives will more than double this year. Why? The booming market in home PCs, which sport CD-ROMs as standard issue.



Not for Desktops: PCMCIA is mainly a notebook phenomenon that will make inroads into only 3 percent of new desktop machines by 1995.

NOTES RIVAL

Information Anytime, Anywhere

Schedules under Your Sleeve: Timex and Microsoft have merged chronometer and computer to get this wrist-top PDA.

If you can't get the information you need when you need it, it's just wasted bits. So how can you keep all the corporate data you have stored on networks, desktops, and portable PCs neatly filed and easily accessible? If Microsoft has its way, it's all down to Exchange Server—the software giant's client-server messaging product, due out in early 1995.

Exchange Server's promise is this: It will open a single window into all the information that people need—files, databases, voice mail, and, of course, e-mail, faxes, and schedules. More comprehensive than the small-office solutions that handle only messages, Exchange Server will let you replicate information stores (called public folders) among users and workgroups. Exchange Server's front end—the InfoCenter—will first show up in Chicago and Windows NT (and eventually the Mac, Unix, and a number of other platforms).

Does this sound like Lotus Notes to you, too? Maybe, but Microsoft has avoided pitting its Exchange Server directly against Lotus's more established groupware product—with good reason. While Exchange Server provides more control over the information to be shared and who sees it—a big plus—Notes is already established as a platform for developing workflow applications for use across an entire enterprise. Also, Lotus's cross-platform back-end strategy (the Notes server runs on Windows, OS/2, NetWare, and Unix) makes it much more flexible for large organizations: The server for Exchange Server runs only on Windows NT—though it will work with Notes

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Micrografx is giving away its ABC SnapGraphics 1.0 until September 30, 1994. Check out its CompuServe CIS:MICROGRAFX forum or call (800) 653-3510.
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PHOTOGRAPH BY ARNOLD TIDSEJO

through a third-party gateway.

But get this: Microsoft's Exchange Server has one feature Lotus can't touch, and that's a wrist-top client. Timex's Data Link watch downloads your schedule, phone book, and to-do lists using a light-sensitive aperture to read pulses sent from your desktop's CRT.

Thanks for the Memory Memory prices spiked last year because of panic following a fire in a crucial packaging plant. So why are prices still high? It's a software problem. Resource-hogging new versions of Excel, WordPerfect, and other programs are forcing us to places like SIMMs 'R' Us and driving prices up to $48 per megabyte, a 25 percent increase from last year.

Low, to Go Call the United Nations! Compaq, AST, and Toshiba are locked in a price war for hegemony in the portable market. For months, they've been slashing prices—not just on slow sellers but on some of their best and brightest, like Toshiba's T1950CS Satellite color notebook. Compaq recently topped the 20 percent discount mark by slashing up to 29 percent off the prices of some Aero models.

Plug and Play? Not Today It may be a while before all of Plug and Play's elements are in place. Check: a Plug-and-Play operating system (namely, Chicago), allegedly near the end of the year. Check: developer utilities from Intel, this fall. Check: Plug-and-Play BIOS or BIOS extensions to extend Plug and Play for Windows 3.1, also this fall. So far, so good. But don't hold your breath for the peripherals....

Your Tax Dollars at Work

Finally, the Information Superhighway is becoming businesslike. **CommerceNet,** the result of a $6 million federal grant and an equal amount in private funds, provides an online market for ordering technology products (privately, thanks to two-part encryption). The goal? Shorter procurement and development cycles and more competitive bidding. Contact CommerceNet at (415) 617-8790 or info@commerce.net.

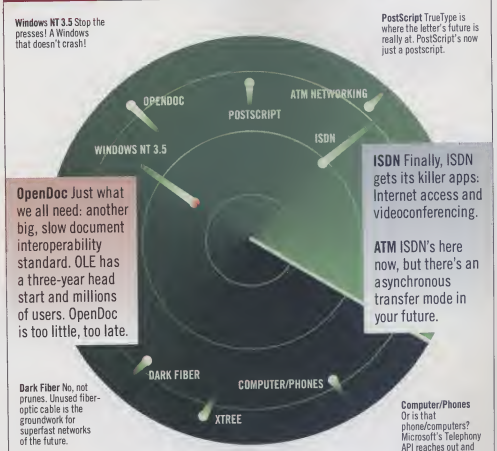
CD-ROM Prices

Here's the spread of the best prices we could find for double-speed SCSI-2 internal CD-ROM drives. Prices do not include tax or shipping and are accurate as of June 30.

Product	Price
Chinon 535	$305
TC Computers/Treasure Chest (800) 723-8282	
Plextor DM-3028	$269
MPS Multimedia (800) 533-4677	
Plextor DM-3028	$285
Storage USA (800) 538-3475	
Sony CDU 561	$289.83
Computer Discount Warehouse (800) 726-4239	
Toshiba 4101	$209
DirectWay 3000 (800) 882-8108	

Reader Service Numbers: Computer Discount Warehouse *605;* DirectWay 3000 *606;* MPS Multimedia *607;* Storage USA *608;* TCComputers/Treasure Chest *609*

RADAR DOS SUPERSTAR DIES—PC COMMUNICATION THRIVES



Windows NT 3.5 Stop the presses! A Windows that doesn't crash!

PostScript TrueType is where the letter's future is really at. PostScript's now just a postscript.

OpenDoc Just what we all need: another big, slow document interoperability standard. OLE has a three-year head start and millions of users. OpenDoc is too little, too late.

ISDN Finally, ISDN gets its killer apps: Internet access and videoconferencing.

ATM ISDN's here now, but there's an asynchronous transfer mode in your future.

Dark Fiber No, not prunes. Unused fiber-optic cable is the groundwork for superfast networks of the future.

XTree Everyone's favorite DOS file manager bites the dust. Can DOS itself be far behind?

Computer/Phones Or is that phone/computers? Microsoft's Telephony API reaches out and touches someone else's hardware.

What's on the scope? If it's near or moving toward the middle, pay attention to it. If it's moving off the screen, forget about it for now. Your time is too valuable.

A Game of Pen And Mouse

The nails are being hammered into pen computing's coffin, right? Well, not necessarily. Pair up that pen with a mouse and you have a pointing and handwriting tool (great for personalizing your PC fax messages). That's the killer combination that APT Appoint, Kurta, and Creative Labs are now offering.

APT Appoint introduced the $299 Gliffic Plus DeskSet last year, combining a mouse pad, a battery-powered pen and mouse, and a digitizing tablet. Kurta followed suit with a minitablet from its line of high-end artists' pens and a $25 2-volt battery-powered mouse for the PenMouse. And in the middle of the year, Creative Labs unveiled its $199 Aero-Duet wireless pointer, an infrared pen-and-mouse offering with 3-D controls for graphics and games.

Contributors to Pulse: MIKE HOGAN, SHYAMALA REDDY, RICHARD SCHWERIN, GEORGE MEIER, RAPHAEL NEEDLEMAN, JAMES OLIVER CURY.
Edited by MATTHEW J. LAKE

Chicago Watch: Multimedia

How many bells and whistles does it take to make multimedia? Check out Chicago's list: Based on **32-bit apps** doing **preemptive multitasking,** the windy OS supports **polymessage MIDI,** which uses a single interrupt for multiple MIDI instructions—more sound with less CPU drag. Other sound and vision offerings in Chicago: **Voice codecs** (compression/decompression algorithms) such as **TrueSpeech** crunch down business sound (read, voice messages); 32-bit **Indeo** and **Cinepak** codecs decompress video faster; and a new MCI device driver, APIs, and media player software decompress **MPEG** (Moving Picture Experts Group)-encoded video with or without assistance from hardware such as Sigma Design's ReelMagic.

SOFTWARE SALESWIRE

PERSONAL PRODUCTIVITY **CD-ROMs** GAIN GROUND

BUSINESS APPLICATIONS	Vendor	Price	Comments	MAY	JUNE
Office 4.0 for Windows	Microsoft	$750	Low price for leading Windows apps.	12	1
ProComm Plus 2.*x*	Datastorm	$129	Dialing directory with attachable notes.	9	2
Word 6.0 for Windows	Microsoft	$495	Wizards ease document formatting.	2	3
WordPerfect 6.0	WordPerfect	$495	New modes bring better graphics to DOS.	3	4
WordPerfect 6.*x* for Windows	WordPerfect	$495	Spreadsheets and databases, linked.	6	5

UTILITIES	Vendor	Price	Comments	MAY	JUNE
MS-DOS 6.0	Microsoft	$129	Undelete for both DOS and Windows.	1	1
Windows 3.1	Microsoft	$150	Robust multitasking, drag and drop.	2	2
QEMM 7	Quarterdeck	$100	New painless parameter changes.	3	3
UnInstaller 2.0 for Windows	MicroHelp	$79	System Cleanup ousts unused files.	11	4
Windows for Workgroups 3.11	Microsoft	$220	Share files, printers, and messages.	6	5

PERSONAL PRODUCTIVITY	Vendor	Price	Comments	MAY	JUNE
Street Atlas USA 2.0 CD-ROM	DeLorme	$169	View U.S. by city, area code, zip code.	11	1
Quicken 7 for DOS	Intuit/ChipSoft	$70	Organize with financial calendar.	1	2
Quicken 3.0 for Windows	Intuit/ChipSoft	$70	Offers financial calendar advantages.	3	3
Print Shop Deluxe Ensemble	Broderbund	$130	Print Shop's graphics effects on CD.	-	4
Calendar Creator Plus 2.0	SoftKey	$69	Schedule single or multiple groups.	7	5

Software Saleswire is compiled by D. Meier, Inc. once each month after gathering ranked order sales information supplied by the following software industry sources 888-Software, ABCO Distributors, American Software, Babbages, Baker & Taylor Software, COMPUSA, Computability, Computer Discount Warehouse, Corporate Software, Dustin Discount Software, Egghead Discount Software, Electronics Boutique, GateFA, GTSI, Ingram-Micro, Jesha Distributing, KeyVE, Lasik Inc\. Merisel, Multiple Zones, Navarre, PC Connection, Software Spectrum, Software, Etc. and Walldensoftware. They represent sales through some of thousands of resellers and more than $8 billion of software sales. A weighting system is applied to each entry based on three factors, the entry's position in the individual chart, the power of the contributing source (based on annual gross sales) and the relative strength of a source in a given category of software. All prices are suggested retail and are subject to change.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ARNOLD TIDSELJO

Go Ahead, Get Carried Away

Let Your Imagination Go Wild

GATEWAY 2000
Microsoft Office

Experience the World of Gateway 2000!

Go ahead. Let yourself get carried away. Because when you buy a computer from Gateway 2000®, you can lose yourself in a whirlwind of extraordinary computer systems and fantastic software. You'll feel like there's absolutely nothing on earth you can't do! So let your imagination run wild. Soon you'll be opening the doors to Gateway 2000 where prices are a breeze and computer dreams really do come true!

Most Gateway desktop systems now include larger hard drives, including a 1GB hard drive on our P5-90XL Pentium™-based machine. So there's no way you can get caught short of space. A TelePath™ fax/modem is included on our new Pentium-based multimedia systems. And CD-ROM drives are standard on all desktop systems. Just imagine what you can accomplish with Microsoft's Office Professional, including the latest versions of MS Word, Excel, PowerPoint® and Access®, now standard on all 486 PCI and Pentium-based systems.

A standard three-year limited parts warranty on all desktop systems and Gateway monitors tops off our tradition of bringing you the best service and support in the industry.

Sound too good to be true? Well, that's not all. The Gateway HandBook® 486 portable PC is now priced at legendary low prices.

Gateway 2000 has grown to become a Fortune 500 company, but we're still the down-to-earth Midwesterns who have always given you a good old-fashioned value. Go ahead, take a visionary's leap into the Gateway 2000 experience. Soon you'll be saying, "There's no place like Gateway, there's no place like Gateway."

GATEWAY2000

You've got a friend in the business. ®

800-846-2062

All the incredible talent in this ad is provided by Gateway 2000 employees and family members.

Better Homes and Gardens
Healthy Cooking
CD

Everything Under The Sun!

Supernatural power. Mesmerizing features. Stunning software. It's the Gateway 2000® experience. A place where you can have the best CPUs in the land — and so much more — when you buy a Gateway 2000 Pentium™-based system. And while others are huckstering their stripped-down Pentium-based computers, Gateway presents systems packed with the all the stuff dreams are made of!

There's virtually no end to the features included: hard drives up to 1GB, CD-ROM drives, outstanding sound and video performance, the best software, fax/modems on two new multimedia models, and a standard three-year limited parts warranty.

Your dream machine no longer eludes you. Gateway 2000 is making those dreams come true!

Raising The Roof Extras

We always want to keep our customers ahead of the industry. So along with Intel®'s super-charged Pentium processor, Gateway helps you extend the life of your system by including incredible 540MB, 730MB or 1GB hard drives on all Pentium-based systems. Get used to the feeling of being spoiled, because you also get CD-ROM drives, superior video performance *and* a ton of memory on *all* desktop systems!

All Pentium processor-based models include a PCI local bus and an enhanced PCI/IDE controller allowing your hard drive to transfer data up to twice as fast as non-enhanced systems.

And now Gateway's high-quality desktop systems *and* Gateway monitors are backed by a three-year limited parts warranty. Believe it — this is one of the best warranties you'll find anywhere!

Multimedia Mania

For those who insist on only the very best, your Shangri-La is our new P5-60 and P5-90 Best Buy multimedia systems. Watch out, 'cuz they're jam-packed with all the premium multimedia features you can imagine! Including a TelePath™ fax/modem and communications software so you can speak to the world from your own living room. And tunes never sounded so good with a 16-bit

sound card and Yamaha® stereo-quality speakers. Play your audio CDs, hear audio clips or record audio all in perfect harmony.

Wondering what "multimedia" *really* means for you? It's a whole new universe of knowledge, entertainment, communication *and* educational capabilities. Talk about being entranced! You'll experience interactive, full-motion video and stereo audio. And Gateway gives you the key to this universe in a super-fast, feature-packed machine.

Get the best of all possible worlds with these new P5-60 and P5-90 Best Buy multimedia machines!

Software Nirvana

It's a sweet deal. All Gateway Pentium-based systems now come with Microsoft Office Professional, an incredible combination of Microsoft's most popular business applications, including Microsoft Word, Excel, PowerPoint® presentation graphics program, and Access® database, all on a single CD with on-line manuals. These programs in Office Professional are so tightly integrated, they work together as if they were a single program. Also included is Corel Professional Photos CD Sampler with tools to view Photo CD images.

Call for more great software options including our value-packed Multimedia Starter Pack.

P5-90XL Paradise

Is it fantasy or for real? Well, it's the Gateway P5-90XL. This ultimate high-flying Pentium-based PC has a larger-than-life 1GB hard drive. You're gonna get all the power and speed you need for today *and* tomorrow! And an ATI GX video card using the Mach 64 graphics accelerator, one of the first and fastest 64-bit accelerators on the market. It's awe-inspiring to see the display on the 17-inch CrystalScan® monitor. Sound, you ask? Ensoniq®'s Soundscape™ wavetable sound card makes a staggering difference in audio quality. And you'll get a great balance of crisp highs and plenty of heart-pounding bass — in full stereo sound — from the Altec Lansing ACS-31 speakers, with subwoofer.

And for the system of *your* dreams, we'll configure a system specifically to fit your needs. Get everything under the sun with a powerful value-packed Pentium-based system from Gateway 2000!

GATEWAY 2000

"You've got a friend in the business."®

800-846-2062

ENHANCED IDE

intel inside pentium PROCESSOR

You'll be in paradise with a loaded Gateway P5-90XL machine!

Know No Boundaries

GATEWAY 2000 COLORBOOK

You'll be transported to outer bounds when you discover the ColorBook™ from Gateway 2000.® Experience the rapture of color portability *and* performance with a 250MB hard drive on our 50MHz and 75MHz models. A rainbow of 256 brilliant colors in VGA mode bursts from an incredible 10-inch dual-scan screen on three ColorBook models. You won't find another portable screen this big, this affordable, anywhere else.

And while everyone else is hiking up their color portable prices, Gateway still offers you an incredible value on our feature-packed ColorBooks, from the $1,999 SX model right up to the DX4-75. And our DX2-50 model recently won *PC World's* Best Buy award in the Power Moblile PC category.

All Gateway ColorBooks are based on the Intel® SL Enhanced 486 processor with enough power and memory to run all your Windows applications. Weighing less than 5.7 pounds, measuring 1.77-inches thin, all models include two PCMCIA Type II or one Type III slots, excellent battery life, carrying case and a great suspend/resume feature. Our DX2 and DX4 models also include PCMCIA fax/modems. You also get Microsoft Works™ or MS Office Professional standard.

No, it's not an illusion ... it's the ColorBook from Gateway 2000.

GATEWAY 2000 HANDBOOK 486

Visualize the ideal portable experience. On the road to enlightenment you'd like to have a lightweight, compact, real 486 PC at an uncommonly low price. The Gateway 2000 HandBook® 486 is so extraordinary, it's portable computing utopia! With unbelievable prices on all HandBook models (they start at just $999!) there's never been a better time to indulge yourself in a world of 486 power that you can take anywhere.

The HandBook's slight frame — weighing less than three pounds and measuring roughly 10 x 6 inches — makes it an enchanting little PC. The HandBook DX2-50 gives you more MIPs per pound than any other portable PC. With Microsoft Office Professional included, the DX2-50 is an unbeatable value. And at these prices you can get the HandBook as a companion to your desktop system.

The HandBook's features are astounding. It has a bright, backlit VGA screen and a comfortable, touch-type keyboard along with an external diskette drive and leather carrying case. With two batteries included, the HandBook also lets you "hot swap" — change batteries or peripheral while the PC is running without rebooting the system or losing data.

All Gateway ColorBook and HandBook portable PCs come with a standard one-year limited parts warranty. A special VIP warranty is available only at the time of purchase for an additional $100.

intel inside

You Can Have It All!

The Gateway 2000 Family PC

There's no place like home when you have a Gateway 2000® Family PC™ in the house. Every member of your family will be swept away as they discover inspiration, entertainment and learning experiences.

This fully equipped multimedia system takes you to a whole new dimension. You get a fast CD-ROM drive to run the best programs and games with sound, pictures, animation and video. With its high-quality sound card and speakers, the Family PC lets you play music CDs, hear audio clips or record audio — all with magical stereo sound.

The Family PC's fax/modem has all the communication software you need to access information and other computer users from all over the world through on-line services.

Experience a virtual software playground with Microsoft Works™ Multimedia Edition, MS Encarta 1994 Multimedia Encyclopedia, MS Money,™ **new** MS Complete Baseball, MS Golf, and Corel Professional Photos CD Sampler.

You won't find another home PC more loaded than the Gateway Family PCs and our Pentium-based multimedia systems — in any land.

3-Year Warranty

Gateway desktop systems come with one of the strongest warranties in the industry. All Gateway 2000 desktop PCs are backed by a three-year limited warranty on parts. The new three-year limited parts warranty includes Gateway monitors.

Gateway customers also receive a 30-day money-back guarantee and toll-free technical support. And *PC Magazine* readers recently honored us, for the fourth consecutive time, with their highest rating in *PC Mag's* Service and Reliability survey.

On-site service is available during the first year in most U.S. locations and may be provided without charge if our technicians determine it necessary.

For details on our new warranty and all of our service and support policies, please call or write for a free written copy.

Payment Options

Gateway accepts most major credit cards and C.O.D. terms, with net 30-day terms and leasing options available to qualified commercial customers. You can also apply for the Gateway 2000 DuoLine™ MasterCard® Card, issued by Dial National Bank, Des Moines, Iowa.

To Other Worlds

Gateway 2000 customers in Canada and Puerto Rico receive toll-free telephone service in both countries (see the back page of this ad for special 800 numbers) along with award-winning technical support and CSA approvals. On-site service is available in some Canadian and Puerto Rican locations, and our international shipping rates are among the most competitive in the industry.

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GATEWAY 2000 FamilyPC

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A Gateway 2000 Family PC is your doorway to new worlds.

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energy STAR

Multimedia Systems

4SX-33 FAMILY PC™

- Intel® 33MHz 486SX CPU*
- 4MB RAM
- 340MB 13ms IDE Hard Drive
- Local Bus Graphics with 1MB
- Double-Speed CD-ROM, 16-Bit Sound Card & Speakers
- 2400/9600 Data/Fax Modem
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- 14" Color SVGA Monitor
- Mini Desktop Case
- 101-Key Keyboard & Mouse
- MS-DOS® 6.2 & WFW 3.11
- MS Works,™ Encarta, Baseball, Money,™ & Golf
- 3-Year Limited Parts Warranty

$1499

4DX2-66 FAMILY PC

- Intel 66MHz 486DX2 CPU*
- 8MB RAM, 128KB Cache
- 420MB 13ms IDE Hard Drive
- Local Bus Graphics with 1MB
- Double-Speed CD-ROM, 16-Bit Sound Card & Yamaha® Speakers
- 2400/9600 Data/Fax Modem
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- 14" Color SVGA Monitor
- Mini Desktop Case
- 101-Key Keyboard & Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.2 & WFW 3.11
- MS Works, Encarta, Baseball, Money, & Golf
- 3-Year Limited Parts Warranty

$1999

P5-60 BEST BUY

- Intel 60MHz Pentium™ CPU*
- 8MB RAM, 256KB Cache
- 540MB 13ms IDE Hard Drive
- PCI Enhanced IDE Interface
- PCI Local Bus Graphics with 1MB
- Double-Speed CD-ROM
- 16-Bit Sound Card & Yamaha Speakers
- TelePath™ II 14.4K Fax/Modem
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- 15" Color CrystalScan® Monitor
- Desktop Case
- 101-Key Keyboard & Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.2 & WFW 3.11
- MS Office Professional CD
- 3-Year Limited Parts Warranty

$2499

P5-90 BEST BUY

- Intel 90MHz Pentium CPU*
- 8MB RAM, 256KB Cache
- 730MB 13ms IDE Hard Drive
- PCI Enhanced IDE Interface
- PCI Local Bus Graphics with 2MB
- Double-Speed CD-ROM
- 16-Bit Sound Card & Yamaha Speakers
- TelePath II 14.4K Fax/Modem
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- 15" Color CrystalScan Monitor
- Desktop Case
- AnyKey® Keyboard & Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.2 & WFW 3.11
- MS Office Professional CD
- 3-Year Limited Parts Warranty

$2999

Professional Systems

4SX-33

- Intel 33MHz 486SX CPU*
- 4MB RAM
- 340MB 13ms IDE Hard Drive
- Local Bus Graphics with 1MB
- Double-Speed CD-ROM
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- 14" Color SVGA Monitor
- Mini Desktop Case
- 101-Key Keyboard & Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.2 & WFW 3.11
- MS Works 3.0 CD
- 3-Year Limited Parts Warranty

4SX-33 $1299
4DX2-66 $1599
(w/ 540MB Hard Drive)

P4D-66

- Intel 66MHz 486DX2 CPU*
- 8MB RAM, 128KB Cache
- 730MB 13ms IDE Hard Drive
- PCI Enhanced IDE Interface
- PCI Local Bus Graphics with 1MB
- Double-Speed CD-ROM
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- 15" Color CrystalScan Monitor
- Desktop Case
- AnyKey Keyboard & Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.2 & WFW 3.11
- MS Office Professional CD
- 3-Year Limited Parts Warranty

$2199

P5-60

- Intel 60MHz Pentium CPU*
- 8MB RAM, 256KB Cache
- 540MB 13ms IDE Hard Drive
- PCI Enhanced IDE Interface
- PCI Local Bus Graphics with 1MB
- Double-Speed CD-ROM
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- 15" Color CrystalScan Monitor
- Desktop Case
- AnyKey Keyboard & Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.2 & WFW 3.11
- MS Office Professional CD
- 3-Year Limited Parts Warranty

$2299

P5-90 XL

- Intel 90MHz Pentium CPU*
- 16MB RAM, 256KB Cache
- 1 GB 10ms IDE Hard Drive
- PCI Enhanced IDE Interface
- ATI Mach 64 with 2MB VRAM
- Double-Speed CD-ROM
- 16-Bit Wavetable Sound Card & Altec ACS-31 Speakers
- 3.5" Diskette Drive
- 17" Color CrystalScan 1776LE
- Tower Case
- AnyKey Keyboard & Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.2 & WFW 3.11
- MS Office Professional CD
- 3-Year Limited Parts Warranty

$3999

Portables

HANDBOOK® 486

- 2.94 Lbs., 9.75" x 5.9" x 1.6"
- SL Enhanced Intel 486 or DX2 Processor
- 4MB or 8MB RAM (expandable to 20MB)
- 80 to 250MB IDE Hard Drive
- External 3.5" Diskette Drive
- 7.9" Backlit VGA Display
- 2 NiMH Batteries & AC Pack
- Suspend/Resume Feature
- 1 PCMCIA Type II Slot
- EZ Point™ Integrated Pointer
- 78-Key Keyboard
- Parallel, Serial & PS/2® Ports
- Leather Carrying Case
- MS Works for Windows 3.0 or MS Office Professional
- MS-DOS 6.2, WFW 3.11 & Serial Transfer Cable

HANDBOOK 486SX-25
4MB RAM, 80MB Hard Drive, Works
$999

HANDBOOK DX2-40
8MB RAM, 130MB Hard Drive, Works
$1499

HANDBOOK DX2-50
8MB RAM, 250MB Hard Drive, MS Office Professional
$2499

COLORBOOK™

- 5.7 Lbs., 11.7" x 8.5" x 1.77"
- SL Enhanced Intel 486, DX2 or DX4 Processor
- 4MB or 8MB RAM (expandable to 20MB)
- 3.5" Diskette Drive and Removable 250MB IDE Drive
- 10.3" or 9.4" VGA Dual-Scan STN Color Display
- NiMH Battery & AC Pack
- Suspend/Resume Feature
- 2 PCMCIA Type II Slots (1 Type III)
- Integrated Trackball (2 buttons)
- 85-Key Keyboard
- Parallel, Serial, PS/2 & VGA Ports
- MS Works or Office Professional
- MS-DOS 6.2 & WFW 3.11

COLORBOOK 486SX-33
4MB RAM, Case, Works
$1999

COLORBOOK DX2-40
4MB RAM, Fax/Modem, Case, Works
$2699

COLORBOOK DX2-50
8MB RAM, Fax/Modem, Case, Office Professional
$3199

COLORBOOK DX4-75
8MB RAM, TelePath Fax/Modem, Case, Office Professional
$3699

Toll free from Canada 800-846-3609

Toll free from Puerto Rico 800-846-3613

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Component Add-On Sales 800-846-2080 • Sales Hours: 7am-10pm Weekdays, 9am-4pm Saturdays (CDT)

Extraordinary Extras!

A wonderland of value: Gateway 2000's peripherals and software, sold only with the purchase of a system.

MULTIMEDIA

Basic Audio Multimedia Kit

Here's everything you need to add multimedia to a Gateway PC.

- Gateway 2000 16-bit CD-quality sound card, compatible with Sound Blaster™ cards, with MIDI/game port, mic in, stereo line in/out
- 2 Labtec® CS-180 speakers

$109 *(with system purchase)*

Wavetable Audio Multimedia Kit

Once you've heard wavetable audio, basic audio will never do!

- Ensoniq® Soundscape™ 16-bit wavetable sound card, MT-32 and FM mode compatible. Supports most software for popular sound cards and standards including General MIDI, Sound Blaster, AdLib, Roland MPU 401, MS Windows Sound Sytem and MT 32
- New Altec Lansing ACS-31 three-piece speaker system
- MidiSoft® Sound Explorer and Time Warner's Aegis™ software

$249 *(with system purchase)*

Altec Lansing ACS-31 Speakers

A Gateway exclusive from Altec Lansing: a three-piece speaker set at a two-piece price. Two 3-inch free-standing speakers crank out up to five watts per channel while the subwoofer can deliver 15 watts of heart-pounding bass. **$119**

Multimedia Software Starter Pack

You get nearly $700 worth of software for less than $100! Package includes Cinemania '94, Mad Dog McCree, Tuneland, Mayo Clinic Family Health Book, Better Homes and Gardens Cookbook, The Lawnmower Man, Sitting on the Farm, Mavis Beacon Teaches Typing, Chess Master 3000, U.S. Atlas and World Atlas. You also get a compact disc cleaner and 20-disk storage rack. **$129**

MONITORS

CrystalScan® 17-Inch Monitor

Non-interlaced color monitor with intelligent multi-scanning analog color display capable of 1280 x 1024 resolutionin non-interlaced mode, .26 dot pitch.
Upgrade from a 14-inch CrystalScan 1024NI monitor **$395**
Upgrade from a 15-inch CrystalScan 1572 monitor **$335**
(Prices good only for upgrades at the time of system purchase.)

COMMUNICATIONS & STORAGE

TelePath™ II Fax/Modem

Internal fax/modem, 14,400bps modem, V.32bis, with 14,400bps fax capability. Includes CommWorks™ data and fax communication software, CoSession™ Host remote diagnostics, plus a CompuServe® trial membership. **$99**

Colorado Memory Systems® TBU

250MB internal tape backup unit copies up to 9.5MB per minute. Comes with MS Windows™ and DOS software, one tape and cable. **$149**

PRINTERS

Hewlett®-Packard 4L LaserJet Printer

A full-featured 300dpi printer loaded with enhanced PCL 5 and 26 scaleable typefaces with 1MB standard HP Memory Enhancement Technology. Parallel cable included. **$699**

Hewlett-Packard 4L LaserJet Printer

A 600dpi printer for four times the dots of 300dpi laser printing with enhanced PCL 5 and 45 scalable typefaces. 2MB standard memory and 3 universal SIMM slots available for additional memory or PostScript fonts. Parallel cable included. **$999**

Epson® Stylus™ 800 Ink Jet Printer

Get the look of a laser at a dot matrix price with the Stylus 800. Prints 150 characters per second at 360dpi — fast and quiet! **$289**

Call for other printer options, including more ***Hewlett-Packard*** *printers.*

NETWORKING

Ethernet Adapter from 3Com®

Ultra high-performance 16-bit Ethernet cards from the world leaders in Ethernet technology.
16-bit Triple Media Card supports BNC, AUI and Twisted Pair media **$119**
16-bit Twisted Pair only **$99**

Token Ring

IBM® 16-bit Token Ring card **$429**

PORTABLES

Peripherals and upgrades available only with a Gateway portable purchase.

PCMCIA Cards

- TelePath 14,400 Fax/Modem. **$249** *(Also in XJACK® version, same price)*
- 9,600/2,400 Fax/Modem. **$149**
- Ethernet adapter. **$149**
- Token Ring adapter. **$449**
- HandBook® VGA adapter. **$229**

Other Accessories

- 2.2Ah NiMH batteries. *Call for prices*
- HandBook 3.5" external floppy. **$99**
- ColorBook™ carrying case. **$49**
- HandBook leather carrying case. **$55**
- Extended VIP warranty — we ship a replacement to you within 24 hours during warranty. Point of sale only. **$100**

Call the Gateway 2000 special Component Add-ons division at 800-846-2080 for our complete line of extras for Gateway customers.

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MULTIMEDIA VIDEO CAPTURE · MULTIMEDIA VIDEO CAPTURE

Create a Moving Experience!

VIDEO-IT!™ & VIDEO BASIC

Video and Still Image Capture
Easy to Use
Low Cost

NOW SHIPPING!

Propel your applications with the power of motion video. Any Windows application, from presentations, documents to training, can be enhanced with compelling videos made on your own PC, using ATI's new VIDEO-IT! and VIDEO BASIC capture cards.

It's simple to do. Simply connect your camcorder, VCR or other video source to your PC. Click on the record button in ATI's video software and your video is captured in vibrant colors.

MEDIACAPTURE for easy capture and editing

Add video to any application. Add motion to your message by inserting video into any OLE compliant Windows application. Or capture still images using your video camera. And you can replay your videos on any computer.

Complete control of video clips

A video is worth a thousand pictures! Enhance your message with video; get ATI's VIDEO-IT! or VIDEO BASIC. Turn your PC into a video production studio.

FEATURES

*CAPTURE RATES****

Resolution	VIDEO-ITI™	VIDEO-BASIC
160x120	30 fps	24 fps
240x180	24 fps	15 fps
320x240	15 fps	10 fps

VIDEO BASIC

- Affordable video capture solution
- Full motion video capture
- Full color still image capture
- Two step compression using Indeo, RLE, Video 1 and Cinepak
- includes "ATI TV" for viewing video-in-a - window at any graphics resolution
- "**MEDIA**CAPTURE" for video control and editing
- Easy to install
- 3 software selectable inputs (2 composite, 1 S-VHS)
- Supports NTSC and PAL
- Compatible with any graphics card and system configuration
- 5 year warranty
- Priced at $249*

VIDEO-IT! adds

- Professional video solution, ideal for longer sequences
- Single step video capture and compress using Indeo video
- Save time, produce video in 90% less time (1 min. vs. 15 mins.)
- Conserves disk space, uses 80% less storage (9MB/min. vs. 50MB/min.)
- Higher frame rate capture performance
- Superior video image quality with comb filter
- Comes complete with $500 of free software**: **MEDIA**MERGE for video editing and production, and ACTION! for presentation development
- Priced at $499*

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Perfecting the PC

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CompuServe: GO ATITECH 76004,3656

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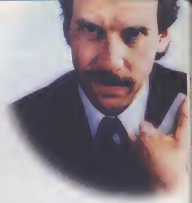
*Suggested US retail price, dealers may sell for less. **Approximate suggested US retail prices if purchased separately. ***Capture and playback rate may vary depending on system configuration.

Circle 112 on reader service card.

Paul Somerson



STAR SYSTEM

What are the scariest ten words in the English language? *"We're from the government and we're here to help you."* The last thing any business wants is a visit from regulation-crazed do-gooder feds. It's worse than **FLESH-EATING BACTERIA.** This explains why the software industry is caving in to morality-thumping cranks who want to control what you run on your PC. Better to deal with these **BLUE-NOSED BOZOS** than the congressional kind.

Recently, the Software Publishers Association and four other PC software organizations announced plans for "the first joint effort to develop a ratings system for the entire personal computer software industry." Actually, this effort is a **COUNTERPUNCH** to a rival ratings scheme trotted out by the IDSA, a group of large video game companies.

The puritanical pinheads screaming for these ratings position it all as an aid to kids. But don't kid yourself. It's a **DEVIOUS CENSORSHIP EFFORT,** pure and simple: First isolate and stigmatize the software they don't like. Then pressure stores to ghettoize it in **BACK ROOM CYBERIAS,** and eventually to stop carrying it. Argue against this and they make you sound like some digital Hannibal Lecter.

It's true that some software out there is awfully violent. And some might offend more **STIFF-NECKED** or narrow-minded consumers. But these days, with brutal Bosnian ethnic cleansing assaults, savage Rwandan machete attacks, and explicit **PAULA JONES DEPOSITIONS** in the headlines, there's stuff in your daily newspaper that's a lot less appropriate for some kids. Maybe it all ought to be rated "R" for reality.

The prudes out there want to be their **BROTHERS' JAIL-KEEPERS.** They want to throttle free expression. And their target is *not* just multimedia titles. They're now starting to go after communications software, claiming it connects children with perverts who prowl the Internet. Online services are peeking through your mail, armed with lists of forbidden **"GEORGE CARLIN" EXPRESSIONS.** What's next—a lock on word processors so you can't type four-letter words? Enough already!

However, there's an **ENTIRELY DIFFERENT** kind of rating system that *does* make sense. And we're adopting it in this issue. It's a new mechanism for rating the quality of computer products in four key areas—usability, performance, technology, and our overall verdict. Ranging from **FIVE STARS** (offering exceptional performance or features for the price) to **ONE STAR** (missing necessary features or suffering from subpar implementation), it will help you identify the best products for your particular needs.

Individual scores are determined after **EXHAUSTIVE TESTING AND ANALYSIS** by a select team of experts from our lab and senior editorial staffs. This star system is the result of nearly a year's worth of rigorous statistical and procedural work to create ratings that you can rely on without hesitation. We hope you'll find it valuable.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES McGOON

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Circle 177 on reader service card.

Ed Bott

Just the FAQs

Hi. My name's Ed, and I'm a newbie. (Hi, Ed!) Welcome to this month's meeting of Newbies Anonymous, an informal self-help group for those of us who feel lost, bewildered, and completely overwhelmed by the Internet. If you've ever traveled in an exotic foreign land—like Nepal or Tierra del Fuego or Southern California—you know the feeling. Connecting to the Internet offers more opportunities for public humiliation than a Friars Club roast or a high school prom. And there's nothing like a Usenet newsgroup—with 3 million people looking on—to show off our lack of technical knowledge and our underdeveloped social skills. Hey, we're all newbies once. Here's how to get over it.

For starters, learn the language. The folks at Berlitz pioneered the total immersion technique, and it works just as well with Netspeak as it does with Norwegian. Read a few hundred newsgroup postings. Pay attention to how the regulars talk. You don't download a file, you FTP it. It's not a forum, it's a newsgroup. Don't forget the acronyms, either. Like IMHO (in my humble opinion), RTFM (read the, uh, manual), and LJBF (let's just be friends—useful in the alt.sex hierarchy).

But total immersion doesn't mean full participation. Resist the urge to post until you're sure you know how a particular newsgroup works. If Mark Twain had had a modem, he might have said: "It's better to lurk quietly and be thought a fool than to post a stupid question to 30,000 newsgroup servers and remove all doubt."

Besides, every stupid question has already been asked and answered. Anyone determined to become a Net expert reads the FAQs—the lists of Frequently Asked Questions designed to keep us newbies from gobbling up bandwidth by repeatedly asking the same questions. One of the best is Answers to Frequently Asked Questions about Usenet, found in news.announce.newusers. Like most FAQs, it's cross-posted in news.answers, which is a great place to look for Net wisdom. And every FAQ can be FTP'd from rtfm.mit.edu.

FAQs aren't the only source of wisdom on the Net. Some of the most entertaining and instructive reading in cyberspace can be found in documents written just for us newbies. Emily Postnews, for example, is the foremost authority on proper Net behavior. Check out her occasionally caustic advice on how *not* to act on the Net. ("Q: What does foobar stand for? A: It stands for you, dear.") For the latest edition of Emily Postnews Answers Your Questions on Netiquette, look in news.announce.newusers.

With apologies to Robert Fulghum, everything we need to know about newsgroups we probably learned in kindergarten. Like these simple lessons:

Be nice. Newsgroups bring out the worst in some people. Faced with a rational argument, they respond with abuse and invective. In Netspeak, a posting that crosses the line into personal attack is called a *flame*. We newbies are often horrified the first time we see a flame, especially if it's directed at us. Relax. Get over it. That's what kill files are for.

Clean up after yourself. Every posting that goes out to a newsgroup gets routed through a few thousand servers (at least), and potentially stored on hundreds of thousands of hard drives. Some newsgroup readers let you attach complex *signatures* to the end of each posting. If your signature file is longer than four lines, you might as well hang a sign on your back saying, "Flame me!" Another bandwidth-wasting breach of netiquette: Littering a newsgroup with meaningless messages ("I agree." "This is a test.") and simple thank yous that are better sent by e-mail.

Don't be a bore. There are a few ancient stories that simply won't vanish from the Net. Like the one about the dying kid who wanted to set a record for receiving the most get well cards. Or the rumor that the FCC wants to impose a tax on modems. The kid set the record and doesn't want any more get well cards. The FCC doesn't raise taxes. Every so often some newbie resurrects one of these tired old yarns. But it won't be one of us.

Every **STUPID QUESTION** *has already been asked and* **ANSWERED . . .** **FAQs** *are there to keep us newbies from* **GOBBLING** *up bandwidth with the same old questions.*

And then there's semi-criminal behavior. Want to get lots of vicious, intensely personal mail aimed straight at you? Then try *spamming* the Net—sending identical copies of one posting to dozens, even hundreds of newsgroups. I won't name the two bozos who posted ads for their law firm's services on 6,000 Usenet newsgroups, because they don't deserve any more free publicity. They broke two cardinal rules of the Internet: Send advertising only to those who want it, and post only where it's appropriate. Sadly, they weren't even newbies—they knew exactly what they were doing.

Wanna be a good Net citizen? Just learn the basic ground rules. You'll dodge the wrath of the Net's elders. And maybe you'll get a chance to help some poor newbie.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES McGOON

Get Your Editors' Best Buy, Top Choice,

EXPERTS NAME THE ZEOS® PANTERA™ #1

PC MAGAZINE EDITORS' CHOICE April 12, 1994

PC Computing BEST May 1994

PC WORLD 50 June 1994

Windows EXPERTS PICK June & August 1994

"Rocket fast performance and a great price make this our favorite Pentium of the lot," *PC/Computing* said.

Top computer experts at seven leading publications agree that the ZEOS Pantera is the best Pentium-processor based system available.

The ZEOS Pantera has earned:

- *PC Magazine* Editors' Choice (April 12, 1994)
- *Computer Shopper* "top choice" (April & August 1994)
- *PC/Computing* BEST (May 1994)
- *PC World* Best Buy (June 1994)
- *Windows Sources* Experts' Pick (June & August 1994)

These prestigious awards all add up to one thing–ZEOS computers are your #1 choice.

Don't settle for less. The Pantera has it all. *PC/Computing* concurs: "Hot performance, room for expandability, and a low price make this system our top choice."

POWER BEYOND POWER

"At the top is the new ZEOS Pantera-66, a Pentium-66 that recorded the fastest benchmark results ever to come out of the PC World Test Center," reported *PC World*.

PC Magazine said: "ZEOS Pantera-66 combines quality features, good price, and high performance.... A consistently above-average performer on all our benchmark tests...."

The ZEOS Pantera received the highest marks on many benchmark tests including the important Graphics WinMark and Disk WinMark tests run by *PC Magazine*. In fact, its Disk WinMark surpassed the next closest competitor by 35 percent!

What makes the Pantera fly at supersonic speeds? A ZEOS designed motherboard with exceptional features such as a hot new integrated PCI Local Bus IDE Controller (supporting up to four IDE devices) that, as *PC Magazine* said, "pushes disk access into new territory."

PENTIUM & 486 PANTERAS

PC MAGAZINE EDITORS' CHOICE June 28, 1994

Even better, we now incorporate the latest award-winning Pantera technology (including PCI) to our 486 PCs. The expanded Pantera line includes more processors–from a 486SX-25 to a DX4-100 all the way to a Pentium-90! The best news: The Pantera DX4-100 also earned *PC Magazine*'s Editors' Choice (June 28, 1994).

These new, improved and even more affordable systems feature local bus IDE hard drives from 214MB to 1GB; memory from 4MB to 24MB; a new 64-bit video controller; 3 PCI slots (one contains our PCI local bus video card) in addition to 5 ISA slots; and on-board Fast SCSI-2 option. And all Pantera systems are 100% compatible with every major network operating system on the market.

yes It runs with NetWare

ALL THE EXTRAS INCLUDED

What's more, we give you all this at a marvelous price. There's no doubt about it. *PC/Computing* said: "We suggest you spend your money on this machine–it offers the best value of any system we tested." *Windows Sources* agrees: "ZEOS Pantera offers the best performance for the price."

The value doesn't stop with your purchase. You get the best service and support in the business. In fact, no company has won more *PC Magazine* Readers' Choice for Service & Reliability awards than ZEOS–six in all. And we were the first to provide 24-hour toll-free technical support–every day!

PC MAGAZINE SERVICE & RELIABILITY READERS' CHOICE

ZEOS offers you all this and more. It's easy to see why the Pantera is the "number one power desktop Best Buy." It's the Editors' Choice. Make it your choice. As *PC/Computing* said, "there's no doubt which machine you should choose: ZEOS's Pantera...this is a deal you simply can't pass up." Call your ZEOS Systems Consultant now at 800-554-5218.

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Circle 248 on reader service card.

The ZEOS® Pantera™ Is The #1 Pentium PC.

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PERFORMANCE:

"At the top is the new ZEOS Pantera-66, a Pentium-66 that recorded the fastest benchmark results ever to come out of the PC World Test Center."
PC World, Best Buy, June 1994

"In terms of performance, the Pantera-66 left little to be desired…this machine scored high consistently and laid claim to no low scores whatsoever."
PC Magazine, Editors' Choice, April 12, 1994

VALUE:

"ZEOS Pantera-66 combines quality features, good price, and high performance..."
PC Magazine, Editors' Choice

"A standout in speed and value…we suggest you spend your money on this machine – it offers the best value of any system we tested…this is a deal you simply can't pass up."
PC/Computing, BEST, May 1994

THE EXPERTS CONCLUDE:

"…one system stands out from the rest: the ZEOS Pantera."
Windows Sources, Experts' Pick, June 1994

"…the most desirable computer in the group."
Computer Shopper, Top Choice, April 1994

"…there's no doubt which machine you should choose: ZEOS's Pantera-66."
PC/Computing, BEST

OK, so maybe we were a little indulgent, but that's what the experts said – and they all agree that the ZEOS Pantera is the top choice. Make it your choice. Call a ZEOS Systems Consultant today.

PC MAGAZINE EDITORS' CHOICE April 12, 1994 · PC WORLD BEST BUY June 1994 · Windows SOURCES EXPERTS' PICK August 1994

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- MS-DOS 6.2, Windows for Workgroups 3.11, Microsoft Mouse, choice of Lotus application

PC Computing BEST May 1994 · Windows SOURCES EXPERTS' PICK June 1994

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Circle 265 on reader service card.

John C. Dvorak

Déjà Gloom

It came right off the wire: A revised earnings forecast from Lotus. The operative word was *shortfall.* There were a lot of excuses. Earlier in the year, the superstores were moaning about a sales slowdown. Then Gateway 2000 announced its performance was disappointing and that profits were likely to be way off. Technology stocks were pounded by this and other bad news.

During any microprocessor transition (moving from the 286 to the 386, or from the 386 to the 486), there's usually a period of consolidation and the market hits a minislump. We already went through the minislump when the Pentium was introduced. So what's this new gloom about? If you read enough news reports, it seems the industry is about to go through a shakeout. Let's examine some of the reasons I think this will be terrible—especially for you, the user.

First, there has not been a substantial power increase in machines since the introduction of the 66MHz 486DX2, which has dominated the desktop for two years. The rule has been that you must double or triple performance to get the market excited. The 90MHz Pentium doesn't do this, and neither does the 100MHz DX4. This means people are loading up on cheap 66MHz DX2 machines during a price war that is costing manufacturers' profits.

Then there's something I call the Commodore 64 syndrome. In the early 1980s, Commodore and its pitchmen sold Commodore 64s into the home market by the boatload. The machines were not as easy to use as advertised, and not nearly as powerful as they should have been. Many people jokingly called them doorstops. They mostly ended up in closets, unused.

Now the new pitchmen are selling multimedia machines or multimedia kits, and again hoping to tap this perceived huge home market. The home market, per se, has never been proven conclusively to exist. There are home buyers, but they tend to be price-oriented, naive, and fickle. Hardly a market to count on. But the prices look right as 486s get dirt cheap.

Multimedia has all the earmarks of the Commodore 64 and some of the earmarks of the once-collapsed game market that knocked Atari out of the picture years ago. For one thing, as snappy as some multimedia CD-ROMs and programs seem to be, they don't always work as advertised. It's a huge pain to get sound boards to work. When a user has one sound card, such as a Sound Blaster, and wants to upgrade to something better, such as a Turtle Beach, the user discovers that the change is not trivial—and sometimes not even possible. When users have to set DMA channels and IRQs manually, then you can kiss the home market good-bye. We're going to be seeing a lot of computers in closets.

And what about CD-ROM titles? Are there enough drives and interest to sustain the product base? There are thousands of CD-ROMs in the pipeline. There's no infrastructure except direct mail to sell these discs. It's not like a Janet Jackson CD that can be distributed to thousands of "record" stores. There are no CD-ROM stores.

So when I read that GTE "spawns a new software unit" to develop CD-ROMs, or that telephone executive Bob Kavner joins Creative Artists Agency to help it get involved with digital interactive media, I have to ask myself, does this sound nuts or what?

These companies, with no experience in the computer business, will flood the market with crap. The shakeout in multimedia will be so terrible that it will take much of the already precarious computer scene with it. The dopey, overhyped pen-based computing fiasco and the Atari game collapse are the models for this one . . . only this will be bigger. The hopes for a killing from multimedia are higher than they've ever been for anything, ever. It's incredible. The trouble is, the people putting these deals together don't realize that what they're doing is based on flaky technologies. This stuff is not ready for prime time yet.

What's annoying is that the whole computer scene will be tarnished. Stories will appear in the *Wall Street Journal.* A know-nothing corporate president will say he was misled. Another will say the research was right but too many people got into the lake. Another will blame the market, saying her company got into it during a downturn. The excuses will be endless.

The negative news will affect the market for computers when consumers read/hear about it. Skittish home users will stall on buying computers. Because the big vendors are relying on a huge profit from this market, they will be stuck with inventory that will become worthless as technology moves to the next generation. These machines will have to be dumped at a loss. The buyers will, of course, end up putting them in the closet right next to . . . the Commodore 64 they bought 12 years ago.

Things don't change much in this business. Neither do the excuses.

MULTIMEDIA? *Remember what happened to* **ATARI . . .** *Don't forget the* **COMMODORE 64 . . .** *Terrible times lie ahead, especially* **FOR YOU,** *the end user.*

PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES McGOON

BRING YOUR CRAYONS TO WORK.

ArtPad is a full-featured, high-performance graphics tablet that lets you draw, paint or just plain create, right on your computer.

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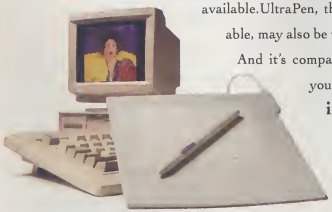
To anyone who's ever thought..."I'm gonna have to draw these guys a picture," here's your chance. From personalized memo's to flow charts to sketches, layouts and logos. Even annotated mail with your pen software. Introducing the Wacom **ArtPad.**™ It's a small and handy, but thoroughly professional graphics tablet from the maker of the world's most critically acclaimed and widely recognized tablets. ArtPad ships complete with the Wacom **UltraPen,**™ the only cordless, batteryless, **pressure-***sensitive* pen available. UltraPen, the most natural computer drawing tool available, may also be the *best way to navigate* on a computer. And it's compatible with just about everything. So, whether your speeding through a spreadsheet or just **adding impact** to *e-mail*, get the Wacom ArtPad. For when you just gotta color outside the lines. For more information on ArtPad or the names of authorized dealers nearest you, please call **1-800-922-6620** today.



Smaller than most mousepads, ArtPad measures only 6 x 7 inches. ArtPad is available in both Macintosh® and PC versions.

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Circle 111 on reader service card.

Gil Schwartz

THE V.FAST VP

Nowhere is the stunning paradigm shift away from substance and into communications for its own sake more dramatic than in the convergence between Vice President Al Gore and the electronic cause he so boldly champions. For those who don't, can't, or won't understand the beauty of the conceptual highway that lies ahead, the vice president is the clearest physical representation of the medium he is trying to create. In these ten important ways, he is the thing itself, and as we understand him, we understand it:

1. They're both very good looking and make a powerful first impression. Although the superhighway is significantly more wiry than the vice president, both are big and handsome, with attractive interfaces that draw you almost immediately into whatever hooey is transpiring. Even those who don't really want to like them end up shaking their heads in grudging admiration.

2. Both have a lot of information and aren't afraid to show it. Anyone who saw the VP take on Mr. Perot in the last election knows that he's capable of retaining gigabytes of data in his random access memory banks and core dumping the contents at will, amazing friends and influencing people all over the place.

3. They both represent a commitment to reinventing things. The vice president is on a mission to reinvent government. The electronic superhighway wants to reinvent the way we bank, shop, visit our imaginary neighbors, eat simulated breakfast, and make virtual love.

4. You have to be very smart to understand either of them. Like the superhighway, which will reward people who know how to access its many levels, the VP has a tendency to talk up—not down—to the public, assuming a certain level of technical sophistication on matters of great importance to us all. This can lead to some problems, since . . .

5. They both tend to wander off into unspeakable technobabble given half a chance. Getting backed into a corner at a party with Mr. Gore as he delves in to the arcana of telecommunications deregulation—or finding yourself in a digital data swamp alongside the I-Way after making an innocent query—is no fun for those with MTV attention spans.

6. They both make conservatives very angry. On the other side of society's spectrum from youngsters who find a 30-second commercial the intellectual equivalent of *War and Peace*, there are the tortoise-headed Luddites who hate anything new and reinventional. These individuals have a smarmy, condescending aversion both to the earnest, hard-working vice president and to the implications of the digital revolution, just as they despise all those laboring to replace existing institutions, technologies, jobs, belief systems, and people with theoretical ones.

Though MORE WIRY *than the vice president, the I-Way bears a* STRIKING RESEMBLANCE *to Mr. Gore . . . . Neither one gets the* LEAST BIT FUNKY *until well after dark.*

7. They're both very clean and morally impeccable, though. The superhighway will be as G-rated as a bucketful of raw transactional data, jammed full of squeaky infotainment and jolly bitmaps of faraway places. Like the veep, the superhighway won't get one bit funky until way after hours, and even then only when we consent.

8. And yet, they're both perceived by some to be relatively nonessential. At the same time, Mr. Gore, as vice president, and the superhighway, as a fictional construct, both suffer from the public perception that, were they to drop from existence altogether, nothing substantial would change. This has to do with the functions both now serve. One is vice president, heretofore a largely ceremonial position that has had little day-to-day impact on the workings of the Republic. The other is an almost wholly fanciful creation of futurists, hopeful investment bankers, and the *New York Times*. That's not very many people, although they are influential. But all that will change! Because . . .

9. They each show far more potential for greatness than they've yet delivered. There's nowhere to go but up for Mr. Gore and his superhighway. Both have shown they can achieve the heights of publicity, are willing to put forth tremendous ideas that can be neither proved nor disproved with great passion, and can build on existing infrastructures to create air castles of daunting proportions—blueprints of a tomorrow yet to come. That's right . . .

10. The future belongs to them both! And what a place it will be, too! A networked festival of services where information hovers just a micron from our fingertips all the time; where movies, music, shopping, and other stimuli are always on the window ledge, cooling; where earnest folks with pinstriped headgear serve up a virtual reality that does battle with the real thing and wins. And in the middle of it all, presiding with vision and good humor, look! It's President Wonk at his computer, at play in the fields of the Internet, interacting with the people, by the people, and for the people. Huzzah!

PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES McGOON

Let's talk scanners.

AT MICROTEK, WE DON'T MAKE COMPUTERS AND WE DON'T MAKE

Whatever you buy a scanner for — document management, desktop publishing, high-end graphic arts — you want the best scanned image possible, the most advanced features and the highest value for your hard-earned dollar.

That's why people who know, pass up the "johnny-come-latelies" in the scanner business and go straight for the first name in scanners: Microtek.

A Reputation for Innovation.

While many of the names in today's scanner market were still making computers, laser printers...or even radios, of all things, Microtek was racking up an impressive array of firsts in scanners.

Microtek brought the first halftone desktop scanner to market in 1984. Microtek was also responsible for the first 256-tone grayscale scanner, the first affordable desktop color scanner and the first affordable 35mm slide scanner. With the recent introduction of Dynamic Color Rendition (DCR), Microtek produced the first automated color calibration and correction system. And now, with the ScanMaker III and ScanMaker 45t, we're the first to market with honest 36-bit desktop color scanners.

Affordable Quality.

Don't need color scanning capabilities? Then don't buy them. The Microtek ScanMaker IIG is a great 300 x 600 gray-scale scanner with a street price starting around $400.

Want color but still don't want to spend big bucks? Look into the ScanMaker II – you get 24-bit color flatbed scanning *and* Adobe Photoshop LE for around $550.

Looking for a fast, single-pass scanner for office and graphic applications? The ScanMaker IISP is the winner of two important Editors' Choice Awards from *PC Magazine* and from *Imaging* magazine. It has software enhanced resolution of up to 1200 x 1200 and a street price of around $750.

For more sophisticated applications, there's the ScanMaker IIHR. You'll get software enhanced resolution up to 2400 dpi — which makes it very popular with

Microtek's Family of Scanners includes: ScanMaker III, ScanMaker IIHR, (both shown with optional transparency adapter), ScanMaker 45t, ScanMaker IISP and ScanMaker II.

PRINTERS. ALL WE MAKE ARE THE BEST SCANNERS YOU CAN BUY.

PC MAGAZINE EDITORS' CHOICE February 8, 1994 Microtek ScanMaker 45P

IMAGING MAGAZINE EDITORS' CHOICE

graphic artists — and a price of around $1100, which makes it very popular, period.

68 BILLION COLORS.

With 36-bit color resolution, the ScanMaker III and ScanMaker 45t are working with far more data than any 24- or even 30-bit scanners. A palette of 68-billion colors means unparalleled richness and depth, clarity of detail and color accuracy that rivals machines costing much more.

The ScanMaker III is a fast, single-pass flatbed scanner with DCR color calibration, software enhanced resolution up to 2400 dpi and a street price under $2700.

You read it right, under $2700.

For real high-quality work, the ScanMaker 45t offers photographers and graphic artists up to 2000 x 2000 dpi software enhanced resolution for scanning transparent images up to 5" x 5". It costs about $6500 and offers a level of quality that – until now – was only available to professionals using costly drum scanners.

FIRST NAME IN VALUE.

No matter how much money you have to spend, you'll find your best value is with Microtek. For example, most Microtek scanners come with Adobe Photoshop or Adobe Photoshop LE at no extra cost.

Microtek is the world's largest desktop scanner manufacturer. We've made more scanners, longer, and have a history of more scanner awards and innovations than anyone else you can name. And since we don't divide our attention between computers, printers and miscellaneous consumer products, we can concentrate on making the finest products in the scanning business. For your free copy of our scanning primer *The Scanned Image*, more information about scanners and Microtek in particular, just call us at 800 654-4160 or fax a request to 310 297-5050.

MICROTEK

Better Images Through Innovation.

Before you buy a scanner, let's talk.
800 654-4160

The following are trademarks or registered trademarks of their respective companies. Microtek, ScanMaker and DCR (Dynamic Color Rendition) of Microtek Lab, Inc., Adobe Photoshop of Adobe Systems, Inc. Prices and software bundles are subject to change

Circle 186 on reader service card.

New! ProShare 200 vs. Vistium 1300

Being There—Sort Of

Have you heard about the miracle of videoconferencing? You know, the cutting-edge technology that's going to bring the world to your desktop, save you thousands of dollars in travel costs, salvage all those wasted hours you spend on planes, and make the traditional everyone-in-one-room meeting a thing of the past?

Don't turn your conference room into a cafeteria just yet. While Intel's ProShare Personal Conferencing Video System 200 and AT&T's Vistium Personal Video 1300 have a lot to offer, their video images are so jerky, distorted, and distracting that you really don't get the full range of facial and bodily cues that make face-to-face meetings useful. Furthermore, since these products are point-to-point only—at least for now—you can't "meet" with more than one person at a time.

But don't despair. The shared whiteboards and application-sharing capabilities that they offer more than make up for the disappointments of their video features. They'll make you soon forget about videoconferencing and embrace desktop collaboration as the real wave of the future.

Sublime and Ridiculous

Setting up a videoconferencing system, especially one that relies on the black art of ISDN, isn't trivial. But once the ISDN lines were in place, we found that installing Intel's ProShare, in particular, was practically painless, thanks to its clearly labeled hardware and excellent hand-holding documentation.

Installing the Vistium was not as easy. The documentation is close to being unreadable, and two of the three adapter boards are conjoined, which makes them hard to install.

Push-Button Interfaces

Both products are a cinch to use. ProShare's main screen consists of a phonelike panel with detachable local and remote video boxes, as well as buttons that let you launch all the features from a single screen. With the Vistium, you launch various features from the Vistium Manager.

While ProShare does support OLE—which means you can cut and paste an Excel spreadsheet, for example, into the shared whiteboard for both callers to annotate—Intel has eschewed existing industry standards for videoconferencing, which include the CCITT H.320 desktop standard and the CIF standard used for "conference room" videoconferencing products. The Vistium, on the other hand, will work with systems based on either standard.

The products' features are comparable, such as a phone book and a shared whiteboard. Both address books let you enter all the usual information,

OVERVIEW Face-to-Face

The Hard Part: Despite its two interface boards, the ProShare (right) is very easy to install. We wish we could say the same for the Vistium's bulky three-board setup (left).

No Surprises: ProShare's ease of use is evident in its control panel (left), which lets you launch all the program's features and access video controls. You can configure the Vistium Manager (above) to float onscreen during a conference and quickly launch a shared application or whiteboard session.

PHOTOGRAPH BY ARNOLD TOSKUJO

ProShare

USABILITY: *Best videoconferencing documentation we've seen.* ****
TECHNOLOGY: *Skimps on some features.* ***

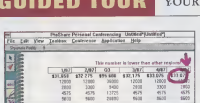
VERDICT: *Best choice for easy-to-use videoconferencing. We'd like to see more emphasis on desktop collaboration.* ***

Vistium

USABILITY: *It's a bear to install . . .* **
TECHNOLOGY: *. . . but we love the app sharing and sizable video windows.* ****

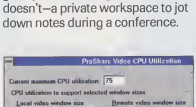
VERDICT: *Expensive but fully featured. Has the advantage of working with existing videoconferencing standards.* ***

GUIDED TOUR YOUR **DESKTOP** OR MINE?

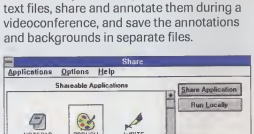


Private Time: While its annotation tools are somewhat clunky, ProShare's shared whiteboard gives you something the Vistium doesn't—a private workspace to jot down notes during a conference.

Markups: With the Vistium's shared whiteboard, you can import graphics and text files, share and annotate them during a videoconference, and save the annotations and backgrounds in separate files.



Picture Tuning: ProShare installs a Control Panel utility that gives you an easily accessible way to adjust the amount of your system's resources that you allot to video.



Program Sharing: Collaborative work is where these applications shine. To share applications with the Vistium (above), you simply add the application to a list. ProShare also lets you share, but it's more complicated.

FILEBOX

ProShare Personal Video System 200

Minimum Memory Requirement: 8MB.
Recommended System Requirements: 33MHz 486, 16MB RAM, 7MB free disk space.

$2,499
Intel
(800) 538-3373
Reader Service No. 611

Vistium Personal Video 1300

Minimum Memory Requirement: 8MB.
Recommended System Requirements: 33MHz 486, 16MB RAM, 10MB free disk space.

$4,995
AT&T
(800) 225-5627
Reader Service No. 612

plus you can include a snapshot with each person's entry. Their shared whiteboards let you import files, annotate them—remotely or locally—and save the markups. You can also share applications using either product, but this is easier to do with the Vistium, which, unlike ProShare, supports file transfer during a conference.

One area in which the ProShare is noticeably superior is in its diagnostics. During installation, it adds several diagnostic programs directly to your Windows Control Panel. Vistium's diagnostic programs are all DOS-based, and AT&T recommends that you exit Windows to run them, rather than executing them through a DOS box. Future versions should include Windows-based diagnostics, but until then it's a hassle to troubleshoot this system.

Bottom Line Speaking of trouble, don't try to run either system on a PC with less than 16MB of RAM. While both companies recommend at least a 486-based PC with 8MB, we found that we couldn't launch whiteboards or share files when we had the video running on an 8MB machine.

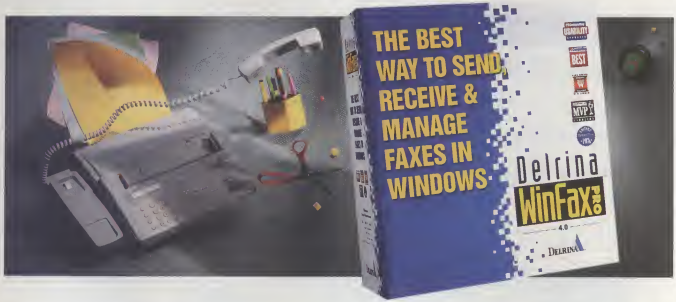
The per-seat cost of these products is still too high for us to recommend them for everyone. But if you regularly go off-site to collaborate on blueprints, reports, or any other kind of document, then the shared-desktop applications are sure-fire time-savers. If you can afford a full-blown videoconferencing package, great—mugging for the camera at the start of a virtual meeting is good for a few minutes of fun. Otherwise, both companies offer desktop-conferencing–only versions of these systems that to our minds give you far more mileage for your money. SHYAMALA REDDY

Guide to the Ratings

In each applicable area—usability, performance, technology, and verdict—a product is awarded a rating of one to five stars. Five stars are the best and one is the worst. In some cases, other factors (such as price) also affect a product's verdict.

***** **Excellent** A market leader that offers exceptional performance in this category.
**** **Good** Excels in a few areas; a good buy, though not perfect.
*** **Acceptable** Product is average for its class; a decent and justifiable purchase.
** **Poor** Out-of-date or substandard product, possibly offset by some positive features.
* **Unacceptable** Missing necessary features or suffering from subpar implementation; avoid.

Introducing Delrina WinFax PRO™ 4.0. You'll wonder how you ever faxed without it.



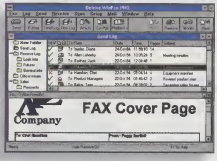
Meet the fastest, easiest, most convenient way ever to handle all your faxing – new Delrina WinFax PRO™ 4.0, the latest version of the best-selling fax software in the world. The only one that combines the advanced faxing features you need with astonishing new ease and usability.

"The best fax package there is."

That's what *PC/Computing* said about version 3.0. And now we've made it even better.

Starting with the revolutionary new streamlined interface that makes it simpler than ever to do anything you'd do with a fax machine, and a lot more. Like sending faxes directly from within any Windows application as easily as you'd print. Or organizing sent and received faxes in convenient folders. Or converting faxes into word processing documents with OCR.

There's added convenience with dozens of ready-to-use cover pages. Fax phonebooks that are drag-and-drop simple. And improved fax annotation tools that even let you add your signature.



Based on extensive usability testing, the new customizable interface includes folders for organizing sent and received faxes.

Don't try this with a fax machine.

Imagine faxing, not just an image of a document, but the actual file itself*, so it's ready to be used in an application. Imagine sending a single document that is automatically faxed to some people and e-mailed to others.

Now imagine you're on the road, and WinFax PRO automatically forwards faxes to you. Or lets you retrieve faxes sent to your regular fax number*. And there's more.

Get new Delrina WinFax PRO 4.0 today and put faxing where it really belongs – on your PC. Call now for information or to upgrade from WinFax PRO or WinFax LITE™. Or see your local dealer to upgrade immediately.

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1-800-268-6082

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*Requires Class 1 modem

Circle 167 on reader service card.

Xerox 4900 Color Laser

First Real Color Laser

USABILITY: *Easy to set up and configure.* ****
PERFORMANCE: *Prints at a rapid clip.* ****
TECHNOLOGY: *QMS was first, but Xerox is better.* ****
VERDICT: *A most impressive color laser.* ****½

Color laser printing is just starting to take off. The newest entrant—the Xerox 4900 Color Laser—bests the pioneering QMS ColorScript Laser 1000 with a lower price tag, faster color printing, and better-looking output. At last, color printing is now fast enough and inexpensive enough to fit into the workgroup

The Big Easy Color laser printers are big—and they have to be to hold four laser cartridges and the gear to run paper past them all. Despite its 108 pounds, the Xerox 4900 was easy to set up and calibrate. We did hit a stumbling block when we tried to print from the PCL5 driver, but dabbling with the cryptic front-panel menus solved that problem.

Need to print an EPS file in a hurry? Just insert a 3½-inch floppy disk into the Xerox 4900 and you can print the file without a computer. You can even set a number of options for the file you plan to print, such as quantity and media size.

The Xerox 4900 prints at a rapid clip. On our test files of a business presentation with text and graphics, it ran an average of 27 percent faster than the ColorScript. However, on documents with lots of text and only splashes of color, the Xerox 4900 was about 18 percent slower than the ColorScript.

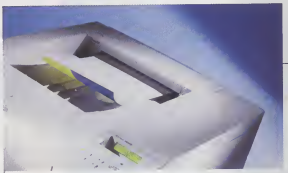
We ran all of our color tests using PostScript Level 2, and therein lies the main drawback of the Xerox 4900: Its PCL5 implementation doesn't support color extensions.

Actually, even running in PCL5, the Xerox 4900 is slower than its advertised speed of 12 pages per minute for printing black-and-white text. It was about 50 percent slower than our Hewlett-Packard LaserJet 4 Plus, a monochrome printer with a 12-page-per-minute engine.

While the Xerox 4900 might be just a bit slow to sit at the end of your network, it's a better solution for color text and graphics—in both quality and speed—than any other technology can offer at this point.

Looking Good The Xerox 4900's output is, in a word, dazzling. Support for resolutions up to 1,200 by 300 dpi (if you pay an extra $949 for the required extra RAM) makes for graphics output that has smooth, crisp colors. Even in its standard 300-dpi resolution, the colors are much more even than the ColorScript's.

Xerox may be first to market with a high-resolution color laser printer, but they won't be the last—QMS has just added a 600-by-600-dpi printer (the Magicolor) to its line. We'll test it in an upcoming issue. Until then, the Xerox 4900 sits at the top of a short list of fast, reasonably priced color laser printers. KYLA K. CARLSON



Ditherless Dots: The Xerox 4900 Color Laser's output in 1,200 by 300 dpi (right) is much smoother than the 300-by-300-dpi output of QMS's ColorScript Laser 1000 (left), where dithered patterns distract from the image.

Leapin' Lasers: Xerox has released a breakthrough color laser printer that offers outstanding output quality at a price that's significantly lower than its nearest competitor.

Faster—and Cheaper

Color at a Clip: The Xerox 4900 Color Laser printed our four-page presentation faster than the QMS ColorScript Laser 1000. Its speed for black-and-white text, however, was less than impressive, running 18 percent slower than the QMS printer.

FILEBOX

Xerox 4900 Color Laser

Resolution: Ranges from 300 by 300 dpi with standard 8MB of RAM to 600 by 300 dpi with 12MB of RAM and 1,200 by 300 dpi with 20MB of RAM.

RAM: 8MB standard, expandable to 48MB.

$8,495
Xerox
(800) 275-9376 ext. 984900
Reader Service No. 613

Guide to the Ratings: ***** *Excellent* **** *Good* *** *Acceptable* ** *Poor* * *Unacceptable*

PHOTOGRAPH BY ARNOLD TOSELJO

Best Little Subnote We've Tested

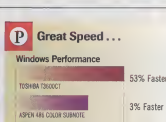
USABILITY: *None better at 4.4 pounds.* ★★★★★
PERFORMANCE: *Fast CPU, great batteries.* ★★★★★
TECHNOLOGY: *It's a pacesetter.* ★★★★★
VERDICT: *Expensive, but worth it.* ★★★★

Sure, we'll loan you our new 4.4-pound Toshiba Portégé T3600CT. Honest. Just as soon as you pry it from our cold, dead fingers. Until then, this baby travels with us everywhere—we're Portégé addicts. We didn't think it was possible, but we like the T3600CT even more than its little brother, the Portégé T3400CT.

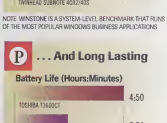
The best way to use the T3600CT: Store your next business presentation on the subnote, then borrow a 17-inch monitor for viewing it. The T3600CT becomes a 4.4-pound dog-and-pony show.

Usability is the quality that sets Toshiba's Portégé series apart. Keyboard layout and response are second only to IBM's ThinkPad 500. Toshiba licensed IBM's eraserhead pointing stick, but embedded two center-mounted concave mouse buttons on the 3-inch hand rest below the space bar, much like Apple's splendid PowerBook series. The result? The Portégé's pointing device is better than IBM's *and* Apple's.

Lovely Layout: Two mushroom-cap mouse buttons poised on the hand rest bring you the best from Apple's PowerBook series. Plus, an eraserhead pointer mimics IBM's excellent ThinkPad portables. The synergy of these designs works better than either of the two portables from which they're borrowed.



NOTE: WINSTONE IS A SYSTEM-LEVEL BENCHMARK THAT RUNS 12 OF THE MOST POPULAR WINDOWS BUSINESS APPLICATIONS



NOTE: ZIFF BATTERY RUNDOWN TEST MECHANICALLY SIMULATES KEYSTROKES

Nothing Faster: More than 50 percent faster than other subnotes? Yes, and with enough power to keep you working for nearly five hours.

Screaming Mini The T3600CT's performance may very well humble your desktop system, thanks to a 3.3-volt, 50MHz 486DX2 CPU and accelerated video on VESA local bus. In our Windows performance benchmark tests, it soared past the Twinhead Subnote 4DX2/40S, the previous speed leader. Although several vendors have announced similar Pentium-based 4-pound systems, scheduled to begin appearing early next year, the T3600CT is currently the fastest subnote you can buy.

Add to that raw power a speedy 250MB hard drive (the T3400CT comes with 120MB) and 8MB of RAM (expandable to 24MB), and you've got all the muscle you need to build presentations and work with beefy graphics files—on airplane tray tables, if necessary.

Best of all, you won't go blind doing so. The 8.4-inch color display (256 colors at 640-by-480-pixel resolution) keeps up with the CPU and graphics accelerator, thanks to the rapid response of active-matrix technology. It makes the T3400CT's 7.8-inch display, which we thought was dazzling when we first saw it, look downright dinky. The colors are bright and richly saturated. Other subnote makers, please take note: Color makes tiny displays usable when working in a graphical environment.

The list of goodies goes on: Lithium-ion batteries provide almost five hours of life. There's one Type II PCMCIA slot. A standard serial port is included, as is a parallel port that doubles as the interface for the external floppy drive. There's also an RGB port for an external monitor. Finally, there's a 72-pin bus connector to attach a $239 port replicator, which makes desktop operations easier.

Price Check Is leading-edge technology of the sort we've described beginning to sound too good to be true? The subnote's suggested price provides a grim reality check: $4,799. At more than twice the cost of other subnotes, the T3600CT competes price-wise with the full-sized 7-pound notebooks that stretch the arms of road warriors today. In its weight class, the T3600CT simply has no competition. For high performance and long battery life in a truly portable computer, it's the best machine available. MARTY JEROME

FILEBOX

Portégé T3600CT

Configuration Tested: 8MB RAM, 250MB hard drive.

Weight: 4.4 pounds.

$4,799
Toshiba America Information Systems
(800) 334-3445
Reader Service No. 614

PHOTOGRAPH BY ARNOLD TIOSEJO

Guide to the Ratings: ★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

With CORELSCSI™ you don't have to wait for "Plug and Play."

CorelSCSI offers you these "Plug and Play" capabilities:

- Makes peripheral installation and configuration automatic and user-friendly.*
- CorelSCSI will react to any changes in the hardware configuration and will automatically load and unload device drivers. New devices install themselves. All you have to do is restart your system.
- Automatically configures the appropriate device drivers for scanners, CD-ROM, optical, and tape drives.
- Provides you with a wealth of detailed information about your host adapter, devices, and operating system.

*Device ID numbers and termination must be set manually.

In addition:

- Connect up to 7 devices to a single host adapter.
- Features device drivers for virtually every SCSI device including printers, scanners, CD-ROM drives, CD-writers, optical drives, tape drives, hard drives, and PC notebooks.
- Also includes other useful utilities such as CD-Audio, WAV File Editor, System Browser, PCD Conversion Utility, Screen Saver, and Wallpaper Flipper utilities.

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*U.S.$ plus applicable taxes.

COREL ext.28 1-613-728-3733

KUR.0073

Circle 200 on reader service card.

Good Price, Not-So-Good Color

USABILITY: *Not nearly as user-friendly as its competitors.* **
PERFORMANCE: *Fast, but colors tend to be oversaturated.* ***
TECHNOLOGY: *Low-end technology means trade-offs.* ***
VERDICT: *Price isn't everything. This printer doesn't measure up.* **

Color ink-jet printers are a game of give and take. The give is their low up-front cost. The take is output quality that's not always top-notch and potentially costly consumables that need to be replaced often.

Texas Instruments' new microMarc Color Inkjet is a perfect example. It's a decent printer with a low price. Its black-and-white print speed and quality are good—however, its color performance is not. You get what you pay for.

Bumpy Ride The typical demands placed on a low-priced ink-jet printer are not complex. You set it up, print, then print some more. Setting up the microMarc was fairly easy, but if you run into problems, you can't turn to the manual for help. It's heavy on technical jabber and low on practical advice.

More importantly, in day-to-day use the microMarc asks for too much user intervention. For example, every time you change between the black and three-color cartridges, you need to flick a corresponding switch inside the printer. If you don't, you're stuck with unsatisfactory printouts.

We had a few problems with our microMarc driver. In a presentation graphics application, the slides did not print within the correct margins. Curiously, when we substituted a Hewlett-Packard DeskJet 500C driver, the four-page presentation printed flawlessly, albeit about a minute slower.

The microMarc's output is adequate. The colors, while vibrant, were a bit too bright. In a chart where bars should have been red, our output was magenta, and other colors such as blue and green should have been more subdued. Monochrome output with the black cartridge is OK—slightly fuzzy text, but rich blacks.

Black-and-white print speed is impressive compared to the DeskJet 500C, so if you plan to do lots of black-and-white printing and don't have high standards for output quality, this printer may suffice.

Take the Low Road The microMarc fits into the lower end of the ink-jet market. You pay a rock-bottom price, but there are trade-offs. The most significant is that you must choose between monochrome printing or color printing with a composite black (using all three colors to make black). The trade-off with color printing is that you end up using all of your colors to make black, which results in a shorter color cartridge life. If you're going to print a long business document with one or two color charts, this is not the most cost-effective solution.

You'll also find that the quality of composite blacks isn't as high as true blacks. If you're printing text documents in black mode, you'll have better quality blacks without draining the color cartridge.

When it comes down to it, price is all that's special about the TI microMarc Color Inkjet. Output quality is adequate for both color and black and white, and speed is marginally faster than the competition. But price alone isn't enough justification to buy this printer. If you do a lot of black-and-white work, it will serve you well. But if you're looking for superior color printouts and an easy-to-use product, you're better off spending about $250 more for higher-end ink jets such as HP's DeskJet 560C or Canon's BJC-600. KYLA K. CARLSON

Points for Price: The best features of the TI microMarc Color Inkjet printer are its sleek design and its $439 list price. The microMarc's performance is solid, but output quality falls short—especially color output. If you have high standards, you're better off spending more money up front for a DeskJet.

Graphics Performance

The Quality Conundrum: The microMarc's color print speeds were faster than the DeskJet's, but its output quality wasn't quite as impressive.

FILEBOX

microMarc Color Inkjet

Competitors: HP DeskJet 500C ($485) and DECcolorwriter 520ic ($449).

Resolution: 600 by 300 dpi for black text with resident fonts, 300 by 300 dpi for all other printing.

Ink Cartridge Costs: $38 for color; $29 for monochrome printhead (including one ink cartridge), $22 for two monochrome ink cartridges.

Ink Cartridge Life: 200 pages for color, 300 pages for monochrome.

$439
Texas Instruments
(800) 848-3927
Reader Service No. 615

Guide to the Ratings: *****Excellent ****Good ***Acceptable **Poor *Unacceptable

PHOTOGRAPH BY ARNOLD TIOSELID

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Circle 138 on reader service card.

SyncMaster	14GL	15GL	17GL	17GLs
CRT Size	14"	15"	17"	17"
Dot Pitch	.28	.28	.28	.26
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Maximum Refresh Rate at Maximum Res. (Hz)	76	76	60	60
MPR-II (Low Radiation)	•	•	•	•
Power Management	•	•	•	•
Flat Square Screen		•	•	•
On-Screen Programming			•	•
Real Color Control				•
Warranty	2 Years	2 Years	2 Years	2 Years

*1994 Samsung Electronics America Inc. The EPA Energy Star logo is not to be considered a product endorsement. Image on SyncMaster 17GLs courtesy of Mike Dixon Design Office

USABILITY: *The software suite's a breeze and installation is no problem.* ****
TECHNOLOGY: *Strong software, tight integration, 400-dpi grayscale hand scanner.* ***
VERDICT: *All-in-one scanning at a low, low price.* ****

The Swiss Army Knife of Scanning

Hand scanners are fun, but not very practical, right? Guess again. Caere's OmniScan combines a hand scanner with three soul mates—OCR, business-card recognition, and fax software—to create a winning package that has real business value. To top it off, there's an image editing program for more artistic projects.

The components that make up the OmniScan package are so well integrated with each other and with other Windows applications that using them is almost second nature. Need to fax a letter, complete with scanned logos, signatures, and handwritten notes? It's almost as simple as printing.

Throughout the package, Caere's careful attention to integration and interface has produced an array of features that are easy to use without sacrificing performance.

Piecing It All Together

Installing OmniScan's 400-dpi grayscale hand scanner may require a working knowledge of IRQs, but it's not as painful as you might expect it to be. And while it's easier to tackle large-sized scanning jobs with a flatbed scanner, OmniScan's smart stitching of multiple scans enables you to scan large images and full pages of text.

The fax software is that rarest of creatures: FaxMaster is a fax program that's actually easier to use than the fax machine down the hall. It packs a wide range of options, such as automatic OCR of incoming faxes, image compression, a thumbnail catalog of sent and received faxes, and customizable cover pages. FaxMaster isn't suited for heavy-duty fax-modem tasks: The distribution lists it creates are somewhat inflexible and awkward. But for occasional faxing, it's hard to beat.

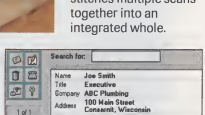
Not Just the Fax Caere's powerful but unintimidating OCR program, OmniPage Direct, works on files that have been scanned in or received through a fax modem. But in the version we tested, recognition proved to be spotty—its OCR on low-resolution faxes was especially frustrating. Assuming that Caere upgrades OmniPage Direct's recognition engine to the one in OmniPage 5.0, we anticipate the recognition rates will improve. (See "The Strong, Silent Typists," on page 92 for a review of the most current OmniPage version.) Typically, however, we've found that hand-scanned OCR trails flatbed-scanned recognition—it's a question of how evenly the source material can be scanned—so don't expect exact parity in results. OmniScan's bundled software (which is delivered after registration) also includes Corex Technologies' CardScan, a neat way to process business cards.

Finally, OmniScan includes Image Assistant GS, a grayscale image editing program for touching up scanned images. It's no substitute for a full-featured photo edition, but it has all you need to improve the quality of most scanned images.

If you've been looking for a good business reason to get that hand scanner you've always wanted, look no further. DYLAN TWENEY

Palm of Your Hand: Sure, the 400-dpi, 8-bit grayscale hand scanner that's the hub of the OmniScan package has its limitations, but it's still a usable package. Once you've installed the card (which may involve wrestling with IRQs), the limited width of the scanning window shouldn't get in your way: The software stitches multiple scans together into an integrated whole.

Here's My Card: The Corex scanning software, with its Rolodex-style interface, may look low-end but it packs a fair amount of muscle. Instead of struggling with Boolean operators to find that crucial contact, use its free-form search engine—enter any part of a word, and it searches every field until it finds likely suspects.



FILEBOX

OmniScan

Hardware: 400-dpi grayscale hand scanner, 16-bit ISA interface card.

Software: OmniPage Direct OCR software, Image Assistant GS grayscale image editor, FaxMaster fax software, CardScan business card recognition, front-end button bar.

System Requirements: 386 or better, 4MB of RAM, 8MB on hard disk.

$239
Caere Corp.
(800) 535-7226, (408) 395-7000
Reader Service No. 616

PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTINE ALCONO

Guide to the Ratings: ***** *Excellent* **** *Good* *** *Acceptable* ** *Poor* * *Unacceptable*

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Circle 175 on reader service card.

Pentium Punch, without Premium Price

Close only counts in horseshoes, hand grenades, and desktop PCs. Thanks to Intel's new 100MHz DX4 CPU, you can get blazingly fast computers—close to the speed of a Pentium system—for less dough than the already-cheap Pentiums.

Hewlett-Packard's HP Vectra VL2 4/100 and Polywell Computers' Poly DX4-100C are no slouches in the speed department, and you can get either of these systems out of the box for just about $3,000 (although the HP Vectra VL2 4/100 comes without a monitor). Either one could save you between $500 and $1,000 over a Pentium, depending on the configuration. And if don't want to give up that Pentium security blanket, you can rest assured—both of these systems are upgradable to the Pentium chip.

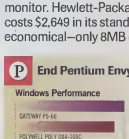
Vectra's Vision The HP Vectra VL2 4/100 is the first desktop system to make it into our labs that supports the Plug-and-Play BIOS. What does that mean for you? This system is Chicago-ready: Just plug in that new CD-ROM drive or sound card, and your system will take care of the nitty-gritty technical details for you.

The slim $2,649 HP Vectra VL2 4/100 comes standard with 8MB of RAM (we configured our test model with 16MB, which raised the price to $3,128), a Conners 340MB hard drive, 256K cache, and a 3.5-inch floppy drive. Your graphics needs will be satisfied with a 1MB dynamic RAM (DRAM), 1,280-by-1,024-pixel resolution Cirrus Logic 5428 local-bus graphics adapter.

Polly Want a PC? The Polywell Poly DX4-100C, at $2,850, comes standard with 16MB of RAM—plenty for running Windows. If you're so inclined, you can boost its system-board memory to 64MB. In addition, the Poly DX4-100C comes with a Western Digital 420MB hard drive, a Tyan local-bus IDE card, 256K cache, a 3.5-inch floppy drive, Orchid's Kelvin 64 VLB card with 1MB of DRAM, and a 14-inch Super-VGA monitor.

Both systems churned out lightning-fast numbers on our benchmark tests. In fact, their speeds were nearly identical. But when it comes right down to it, the HP Vectra VL2 4/100 is too expensive—it has no local-bus slots, and you'll need to buy your monitor separately. Also, the slim design means that monkeying around with its components can be a tricky proposition—there's not much room to maneuver. The cost might be worth it for the convenience of Plug and Play, but Polywell's Poly DX4-100C, with its large hard drive, 14-inch monitor, and roomy tower design, offers the better combination of price and performance. BOB BAYLEY

Attention Bargain Shoppers: Polywell's Poly DX4-100C (right) is a bargain at less than $3,000—including 16MB of RAM and a 14-inch Super VGA monitor. Hewlett-Packard's HP Vectra VL2 4/100 (left) costs $2,649 in its standard configuration, but it's less economical—only 8MB of RAM and no monitor.



Dazzling DX4s: The systems from HP and Polywell blew the doors off our 66MHz DX2 system, clocking speeds that were barely slower than Pentiums.

HP Vectra VL2 4/100

PERFORMANCE: *Not a Pentium, but close.* ****
TECHNOLOGY: *First Plug-and-Play desktop.* ****½
VERDICT: *High price.* ***

Poly DX4-100C

PERFORMANCE: *Pushing the Pentium envelope.* ****
TECHNOLOGY: *Decent features.* ***
VERDICT: *Great price.* ****

FILEBOX

HP Vectra VL2 4/100

Expansion: Four full-length ISA expansion slots, but no available drive bays.

Warranties: Three-year warranty, one year onsite.

Bonus: Upgradable ZIF socket for Pentium processor, supports Plug-and-Play BIOS so you can plug in compatible Plug-and-Play devices.

$3,128
Hewlett-Packard
(800) 752-0900
Reader Service No. 616

Poly DX4-100C

Expansion: Three VESA local-bus slots, five ISA expansion slots, a total of eight drive bays.

Warranties: Five years for labor and two years for standard parts, optional one-year onsite coverage available for $75.

Bonus: Price includes 14-inch SuperVGA monitor, 16MB of RAM (expandable to 64MB), 420MB hard drive, upgradable ZIF socket for Pentium processor.

$2,850
Polywell Computers
(800) 999-1278, (415) 583-7222
Reader Service No. 617

Guide to the Ratings: ***** *Excellent* **** *Good* *** *Acceptable* ** *Poor* * *Unacceptable*

PHOTOGRAPH BY ARNOLD TOSKELIO

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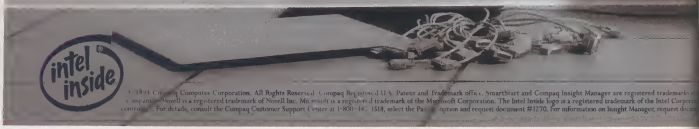
Our experience, fueled by partnerships with such networking leaders as Novell, Microsoft and SCO, has helped us develop an integrated family of networking products – from the new ProSignia VS (which offers true server functionality at a desktop price) to the high-availability ProLiant line.

These systems can easily run today's emerging business-critical applications. They also reflect some refreshing common sense: Namely, there's no reason to downsize from big, complicated computers if you're



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Circle 148 on reader service card.

Rich Color Scanners, Rich Prices

What's the best color worth to you? If you need perfect, true reproductions of color photographs for quarterly reports or other high-end output, would you pay a couple extra thousand dollars to leave the world of 24-bit, 16 million–color scanners behind? If so, check out Microtek's ScanMaker III and Umax's PowerLook—both of which read in billions of colors at resolutions up to 1,200 dpi in a single pass and sell for less than $3,500.

These scanners were not created equal—but both have their strong points. Microtek's newest ScanMaker reads in 36 bits of color, whereas Umax's tops out at 30 bits. For the same list price, Umax throws in a transparency scanning unit—an extra that will cost Microtek customers another $700. But both ship with SCSI II interfaces, Adobe Photoshop, and TWAIN scanning software to drop images directly into Photoshop.

Can You Spare 6 Bits? You can't knock their 24-bit scanners, but Umax's 30-bit scanner (right) and Microtek's 36-bit scanner (left) are in a different league. For photo-quality work, those extra few billion colors make a world of difference.

No Pain, No Gain The software offerings bundled with the ScanMaker III are as showy as the scanner's bit depth. The balloon help that pops up when you pause over controls in the scanning software is a nice usability touch. And in addition to the regular TWAIN scanning software, Microtek throws a color-lookup calibration system called Dynamic Color Rendition (DCR) into the ScanMaker III bundle. The calibration process is simple, at least in theory. Every month, you scan a color chart using DCR, then wait while the software matches color values to its database and adjusts the TWAIN module's settings to compensate for any differences. By the time you read this, Umax will be shipping similar software with the PowerLook.

We did, however, encounter problems running the calibration software, which was sensitive to skewed placement on the scan bed. But if you can withstand the pitfalls, you'll be rewarded with sharp, well-defined color images. If you're displaying your scans on color laser printouts, a monitor, or certain dye-sublimation printers, the level of color accuracy won't seem significantly better than 24-bit scans. But if you're scanning images—especially photos—for Scitex-style high-resolution, high-color output, it's clearly ahead.

Take It to Umax The Umax PowerLook is your best bet for quick installation and speedy scanning (using color photographs scanned at 300 dpi). Its MagicScan software has smart features and button bars that pep up overall usability—such as one-click removal of moiré patterns during the scanning process and a tool for distributing areas of highlight and shadow more evenly (a kind of digital burning and dodging).

Although the PowerLook surpasses the ScanMaker III in ease of installation and speed, it lacks the ScanMaker III's clarity and richness of color. While there's no doubt it produces top-notch color images, the PowerLook results don't quite match the ScanMaker III's. Those extra billions of colors between 30 bit and 36 bit make all the difference in really high-resolution output.

You don't want either scanner for OCR input or LaserJet output. But if you're the type to name your kids Scitex and Leaf, you won't want to be without one of them: the PowerLook for speed and ready-to-run features, the ScanMaker III for easy maintenance of color balance. LIESL LA GRANGE

ScanMaker III

USABILITY: *Software's balloon help racks up the points.* ****

TECHNOLOGY: *Scanner calibration software is a real winner.* ****

VERDICT: *Brings out true colors with 32-bit scans.* ***

PowerLook

USABILITY: *More icon-driven prescanning features, easy moiré removal.* ***

TECHNOLOGY: *Lower color depth than ScanMaker III, but faster.* ***

VERDICT: *Good price for the features, includes transparency scanner.* ***

FILEBOX

ScanMaker III

Expansion: Transparency adapter ($699), document feeder ($499).

Bundled Software: Adobe Photoshop, DCR calibration and correction software, TWAIN-compliant scanning module.

Specs: 36-bit color scans, 600-by-1,200-dpi true resolution, 2,400-dpi interpolated resolution.

$3,499
Microtek Lab
(800) 654-4160, (310) 297-5000
Reader Service No. 618

PowerLook

Expansion: Transparency adapter built in.

Bundled Software: Adobe Photoshop, MagicScan TWAIN module; color-lookup calibration system expected by press time.

Specs: 30-bit color scans, 600-by-1,200-dpi true resolution, 2,400-dpi interpolated resolution.

$3,495
Umax Technologies
(800) 562-031, (510) 651-9488
Reader Service No. 619

PHOTOGRAPH BY ARNOLD TIOSEJO

Guide to the Ratings: *****Excellent* ****Good* ***Acceptable* **Poor* *Unacceptable*

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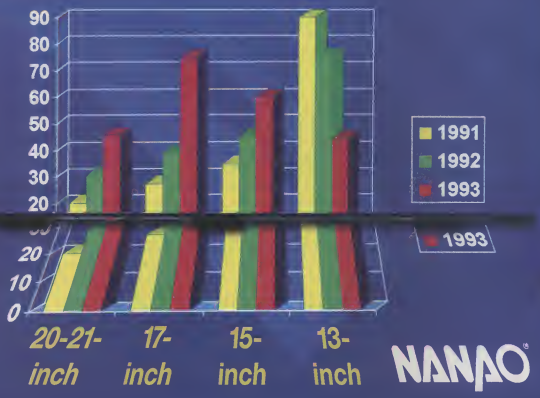

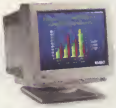

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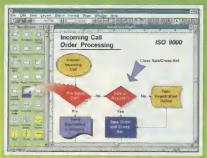

So you don't have a degree in rocket science? Using Visio is cake. Drag the pre-drawn SmartShapes from stencil to page. (In technical terms: Drag. Drop. Done.)

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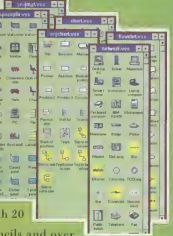

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e afraid.

and with such reckless abandon. Drag it. Drop it. You got it. The moral of the story? Floss daily, spend a little extra on your next haircut and get Visio.

Order today. Call (800) 457-3335, ext. C23 and get Visio for a mere $129. There's no better way to try Visio than to load it up and take it for a spin. Our 60-day money-back offer guarantees you'll love it.

Business drawing for people whose business isn't drawing.™

New! HARDWARE: ThinkPad 755C

Recipe for the Perfect Notebook

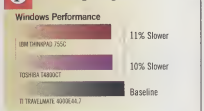
Nothing in life is perfect. Or is it? Consider IBM's new color notebook, the ThinkPad 755C. For starters, it boasts a blisteringly fast 75MHz clock-tripled DX4 processor, a luscious 10.4-inch active-matrix color display, and an optional Texas-sized 540MB hard drive. Despite this speed and display, the ThinkPad 755C's onboard batteries powered it through nearly four hours of our real-world testing. What's not to like?

Life at 75MHz is addictive, especially because IBM coupled the CPU with a fast video subsystem. To upgrade, pop up the keyboard and you can replace the CPU or RAM in minutes. And the 755C has a built-in microphone, perfect for annotating documents (and using up that hard-disk space you spent all your money on). The sound output capabilities (with Windows drivers) wisely remain unchanged from the older ThinkPad 750C.

Same Look, Longer Lasting: The ThinkPad 755C has an impressive 3 hours and 54 minutes of battery life.

Fast Enough: It's not the fastest, but the ThinkPad 755C still turned in impressive Windows performance compared to other 75MHz portables.

In the Big Leagues



Pricing wasn't available at press time, but we estimate that a 755C with 8MB of RAM and a 540MB hard drive should cost just less than $5,500 on the street; the DX2 model with a 340MB hard drive should cost $4,699. If you can afford it, pick up a 755C. MARTY JEROME

USABILITY: *Convenience-store upgrades—quick and easy CPU, RAM swaps.* ****
PERFORMANCE: *Show-stopping speed, impressive battery life.* ****½
TECHNOLOGY: *Sound, video, and a DX4 CPU.* ****½
VERDICT: *Near perfect in all respects; an excellent desktop replacement or traveling presentation machine, if your wallet can stand it.* ****

FILEBOX

ThinkPad 755C

CPU: 75MHz clock-tripled 486 DX4.
RAM: 8MB.
Hard Drive: 340MB or 540MB.
Display: Active- or passive-matrix color.
PCMCIA: Two Type II slots.

Less than $5,500 for the active-matrix version; $4,699 for the passive-matrix version (all prices estimated)
IBM
(800) 772-2227, (914) 766-1900
Reader Service No. 620

Hewlett-Packard 200LX

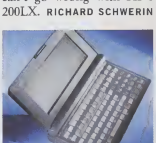
A Palmtop That Makes Cents

Hewlett-Packard's new 200LX looks and works a lot like the 100LX palmtop it replaces, but it includes one big bonus: a preloaded version of Intuit's Pocket Quicken. And like the 100LX, the 200LX includes a junior version of Lotus 1-2-3 and a cc:Mail reader as well.

With Pocket Quicken, you can enter and edit transactions in checking, savings, credit card, and cash accounts; review balances and registers for these accounts; and create and print basic reports. Pocket Quicken is especially useful for tackling business expense reports. And with the handy Connectivity Kit, your Pocket Quicken data can be merged with your desktop Quicken quickly and easily.

HP has made a number of enhancements to the 200LX's Connectivity Kit, including a built-in version of LapLink Remote Access, which provides access to the 200LX drives from within desktop applications. HP has made the translation, merging, and synchronizing of large files easy.

Best of all, HP is introducing the 200LX with 2MB of RAM for $699, $50 less than the previous version. A 1MB version lists for $549. For palm-sized portable e-mail, spreadsheet, and financial power, at these prices you can't go wrong with HP's 200LX. RICHARD SCHWERIN



Cash and Carry: The 200LX includes Pocket Quicken.

USABILITY: *Retains 100LX's nifty layout.* ***
TECHNOLOGY: *A must-have with lots of features for corporate nomads.* ****
VERDICT: *Not as cute as a Newton, but much more functional.* ****

FILEBOX

HP 200LX

Weight: 11 ounces.
Batteries: Two AA.
I/O: One PCMCIA Type II.
Operating System: MS-DOS 5.0.

$699 for 2MB; $549 for 1MB
Hewlett-Packard
(800) 443-1254, (503) 757-2000
Reader Service No. 621

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ARNOLD TIDSELJO

Guide to the Ratings: ***** *Excellent* **** *Good* *** *Acceptable* ** *Poor* * *Unacceptable*

The Canvas.

The Brush.

The Palette.

Diamond's SpeedStar 64 ISA card with CorelDRAW™ 3.0, the easy-to-use starter graphics system.

Diamond's Stealth 32 graphics card with CorelDRAW™ 3.0 for affordable, all-around graphics.

Diamond's Viper SE card with CorelDRAW™ 3.0 for colorful, smooth-running presentations.

Diamond's ultra-fast Stealth 64 VRAM or DRAM graphics card with CorelDRAW™ 4.0 for high-resolution, 24-bit color illustrations.

Diamond's Viper Pro card with CorelDRAW™ 4.0 for enhanced video playback and photo-realistic, true-color graphics.

The Bundle. If you're looking to become a multimedia artiste, you're going to need the right tools. Which is why Diamond is proud to offer its fine art collection—a new series of specially-priced multimedia graphics packages. Each one includes a Diamond top-rated, high-performance graphics card and CorelDRAW,™* the world's best-selling Windows graphics software. There is a bundle for every need. From high-end multimedia graphics users to beginners, now everyone can have the power of CorelDRAW.™* So call **408-736-2000** for full details or call our 24-hour FAX-Back service at **1-800-380-0030**.

DIAMOND
Computer Systems, Inc.

COREL DRAW!
The Best in Graphics

*Includes: CD-ROM Version, Quick Reference Booklet, Installation Guide. User and Clipart Manuals Available at Extra Cost.

All trade names referenced are the service mark, trademark or registered trademark of the respective manufacturers. Diamond reserves the right to change specifications without notice. ©1994 Corel Corporation. ©1994 Diamond Computer Systems, Inc., 1130 East Arques Avenue, Sunnyvale, CA 94086. 408-736-2000, Fax: 408-730-5750.

Circle 172 on reader service card.

THERE'S A CONCEPT!

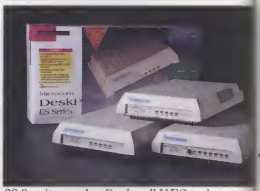
WHY BUY A 14,400 bps MODEM WHEN YOU CAN GET A MICROCOM 28,800 FOR $299.

Microcom modems already give you the fastest speeds and highest reliability in the industry. Now we've added another powerful advantage: unbeatably low prices.

Take our DeskPorte *FAST* ES 28.8. For only $299, it delivers twice the speed of 14,400 bps modems, with throughput rates of 115,200 bps. A great all-purpose modem for DOS, Windows and Unix.

For Windows users, our DeskPorte *FAST* EP 28.8 is a terrific deal at just $399. Using Microcom's innovative parallel port technology, it achieves sizzling speeds: up to 300,000 bps throughput without loss of data.

And if you want outstanding value in a full-featured V.32*bis* modem, put our $239 DeskPorte ES 14.4 at the top of your list. It delivers throughput rates of 57,600 bps. And connects with a wide variety of modems now in use.



Each model features full MNP® 10 (Microcom Networking Protocol™ Class 10) support.* That's the standard we developed for sure-fire connectivity under all line conditions. The 28.8 units employ Rockwell V.FC technology. And all three come with 14,400 bps fax software plus a free 5-year warranty.

So if you thought price might keep you from moving up to a Microcom modem — think again.

For more information, see your Microcom dealer; for a free modem info kit, call Microcom at

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COMPUTER City® SUPERCENTER

MicroWAREHOUSE®
1-800-367-7080

PC Connection®
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Microcom, Inc. 500 River Ridge Drive, Norwood, MA 02062-5028
Phone 617-551-1000 • Fax 617-551-1021

*DeskPorte *FAST* ES 28.8 implements MNP 10 through 14,400 bps

Microcom and MNP are registered trademarks and DeskPorte is a trademark of Microcom Systems, Inc. All other trademarks are the property of their respective trademark holders.

Circle 137 on reader service card.

Logitech Catches a Wave-Table

USABILITY: *Short on interrupts for installation, otherwise fine.* ***
PERFORMANCE: *Minimal harmonic distortion, good stereo separation, wide frequency range.* ****
TECHNOLOGY: *Ear-friendly OPL-4 wave-table synthesis, DSP, excellent MIDI.* ****
VERDICT: *Great sound, great software.* ****

What do you really want from a sound card? WAV files that don't sound like WAV files? Decent software? MIDI playback that has you wondering, "Is it live, or . . . ?" How about the sweetest note: a price tag that's music to your ears?

Most of what you want is sure to be in Logitech's $299 SoundMan Wave. In our lab tests, this board came out singing like a pro with above-average MIDI music, wave-table synthesis that leaves the 1980s FM-technology sound boards squeaking in its wake, and a nice, basic mixing desk for switching MIDI events.

If you've ever tinkered with a grungy old Fostex deck to make demo tapes for your garage band, you're likely to pick up the limitations of the SoundMan Wave's samples, which include some strained guitar and piano sounds. But the SoundMan placed very highly in ZD Labs tests for recording and playback of CD-quality sound. In fact, it placed in the very same league as Turtle Beach's Multi-Sound—and that's the major league—thanks largely to its superior Yamaha OPL-4 chip.

To justify the purchase price as a business expense (a neat trick if you can do it), SoundMan Wave includes fine software for voice annotation and text-to-speech playback. So there's no excuse for not installing SoundMan Wave at work—for productivity's sake. Yeah. MATTHEW J. LAKE

Great Sound, Man: Get jammin' with SoundMan Wave's wave-table synthesis chip and magnificent MIDI.

FILEBOX

SoundMan Wave

Main Benefits: SCSI CD-ROM interface, stellar waveform audio, high-fidelity MIDI, OPL-4 wave-table synthesis (courtesy of Yamaha's chip), DSP option.

$299
Logitech
(800) 231-7717, (510) 792-8901
Reader Service No. 622

Seagate Elite 9

Driving a Hard Bargain

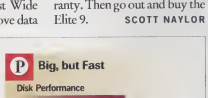
USABILITY: *Easy to install and configure.* ****
PERFORMANCE: *As fast as they come.* ***
TECHNOLOGY: *How'd they get so much storage into such a small space?* ***
VERDICT: *50 cents per megabyte—a real bargain.* ****

They say you can never be too rich, too thin, or have too much storage. But isn't 9GB stretching it a bit? For your server? Heck, no. Seagate Technology's 9GB hard drive, the Elite 9, is also good for desktops that need lots of storage space.

Considering the growth of network applications such as Microsoft's Office—with 31 disks demanding 82MB for full installation—you need all the hard-drive acreage you can get. And don't forget other memory-intensive applications, such as video editing and digital special effects. The Elite 9, with 14 platters spinning at 5,400 rpm, has plenty of room to house them all despite the relatively small size of its box—around 8 by 6 by 3¼ inches.

Our lab-based performance tests proved Seagate's Elite 9 Fast SCSI drive is no slow, hulking mass of magnetism, with a disk speed right up there with high-capacity drives from Hewlett-Packard and Quantum. If that doesn't satisfy you, Seagate also offers Fast Wide Interface, which can move data across the bus at even faster speeds. At less than 50 cents per megabyte, the Elite 9 represents a new low-cost storage solution in what used to be a high-rent district: optical jukeboxes. Still not convinced? Check out Seagate's five-year warranty. Then go out and buy the Elite 9. SCOTT NAYLOR

Massive Storage: There's nothing more embarrassing than running out of server storage, but the Elite 9 can guard against that without sacrificing speed.



NOTE: THE HP AND THE QUANTUM REPRESENT THE FASTEST DRIVES IN THEIR CAPACITY CLASSES. THERE ARE NO 9GB DRIVES TO COMPARE TO SEAGATE.

FILEBOX

Seagate Elite 9

Track-to-Track Seek Time: 0.9 milliseconds.

Average Latency: 5.56 milliseconds.

Average Seek Time: 11 milliseconds.

Cache: 1,024 kilobytes.

$4,500
Seagate Technology
(408) 438-8111
Reader Service No. 623

Guide to the Ratings: ***** *Excellent* **** *Good* *** *Acceptable* ** *Poor* * *Unacceptable*

PHOTOGRAPH BY ARNOLD TOSELLO

Look for us on all the major networks.

Word about PCs from Hewlett-Packard is getting around, and ratings are soaring. According to a recent CRN/Gallup survey, "Use of HP desktops in Fortune 1000 companies has doubled in the last year."[1]

And with good reason. Our broad range of PCs not only meets users' expectations for power and ease of use, it also answers the needs of a network manager. With built-in features like on-board networking, advanced security and asset tracking, HP PCs have what it takes to be top performers on virtually any network. And soon our expertise in network management will reach all the way to the desktop, as we continue to pioneer the development of DMI (Desktop Management Interface).

For more information or the name of your nearest HP dealer, call us today at 1-800-322-HPPC, Ext. 8324. And tune in to the network superstars.

HEWLETT® PACKARD

Give your other PCs something to look up to.

If you're connecting PCs to a network, scan this chart and you'll see it's time to hook up with HP.

STANDARD NETWORKING FEATURES	HP VECTRA M2 PC	COMPAQ DESKPRO/XE	DELL NETPLEX
Advanced Bus Architecture	VL-bus		
Integrated Networkong Interface	16-bit		
Integrated, multiprotocal Boot-ROM	X		
ISA Plug-n-Play Compliant	X	X	
Multilevel Security Features	X	X	X
Asset tracking	X	X	
PC tattooing	X	X	
Optional Desktop Management Software	X		
Bi-directional parallel port	X	X	X
Desktop Management Interface (DMI)[1]	X		

HP quality in value-priced PCs.

- *Intel 486SX, 486DX2 and DX4*
- *Chip upgrades to higher performance*
- *On-board accelerated local-bus video*
- *210-MB hard drive*[1]
- *4-MB RAM, expandable to 64-MB*
- *512-KB or 1-MB of Video RAM standard*
- *ISA Plug-n-Play compliant*
- *Desktop Power Management*
- *EPA Energy Star certified*

High-performance network-ready PCs in a slimline package.

- *Intel 25- and 33-MHz 486SX, 50- and 66-MHz 486DX2, upgradable to Pentium Overdrive*
- *Optional 128- or 256-KB second level cache*
- *170-MB, 14-ms Fast-IDE hard drive*
- *32-bit Fast-IDE local-bus hard disk interface*
- *4- or 8-MB RAM, expandable to 96-MB*
- *Ultra VGA2 local-bus accelerated video supporting up to 1280 x 1024 resolution*

High-performance PCs for the connected office

- *Intel 33-MHz 486SX; 50- and 66-MHz 486DX2, 100-MHz DX4, upgradable to Pentium Overdrive*
- *Optional 128- or 256-KB second level cache*
- *Four mass storage shelves; four expansion slots*
- *One available 32-bit VL-bus slot*
- *210-MB, 14-ms Fast-IDE hard drive*
- *32-bit Fast-IDE local-bus hard disk interface*
- *8-MB RAM, expandable to 96-MB*

Top performance for experts in connected environments.

- *Intel 60-MHz Pentium with 256-KB write-back cache*
- *One PCI slot, one shared PCI/ISA slot, two ISA slots*
- *Four mass storage shelves*
- *270-MB Fast-IDE hard drive with 12-ms access time*[1]
- *Integrated S3 928PCI graphics accelerator*
- *2 MB of VRAM expandable to 4 MB, 1600 x 1200 video resolution*
- *8-MB RAM, expandable to 192-MB*

HP Vectra VL2

- *Local bus Fast-IDE hard disk interface*[2]
- *1280 x 1024 video resolution*[2]
- *Optional 128- or 256-KB cache memory*[2]
- *Free three-year limited warranty for parts and labor*[3]

from
$1,099[1]

HP Vectra N2

- *1 MB of video RAM standard, expandable to 2 MB*
- *Slimline package with two mass storage shelves and three ISA slots*
- *Optional integrated 10Base-T networking*
- *Multilevel security*
- *EPA Energy Star certified*
- *ISA Autoconfiguration utility (Plug-n-Play)*
- *Integrated Desktop Management Interface (DMI)*[3]
- *Free three-year limited warranty for parts and labor*[3]

from
$1,309[1]

HP Vectra M2

- *Ultra VGA2 local-bus accelerated video supporting up to 1280 x 1024 resolution*
- *Optional integrated 10Base-T networking*
- *Systems Diagnostics Utility*
- *EPA Energy Star certified*
- *ISA Autoconfiguration utility (Plug-n-Play)*
- *Integrated Desktop Management Interface (DMI)*[3]
- *Free three-year limited warranty for parts and labor*[3]

from
$1,679[1]

HP Vectra XP

- *Integrated 16-bit 10Base-T networking interface with bus-master DMA*
- *Flash EPROM*
- *Systems Diagnostics Utility*
- *Power-on Self Test*
- *Multilevel security*
- *Asset tracking with non-erasable serial number and customizable PC tattooing*
- *Bi-directional parallel ports*
- *Free three-year limited warranty for parts and labor*[3]

from
$3,559[1]

intel inside

yes NetWare tested and Approved

All HP Vectra PCs come with MS-DOS® 6.2 and MS Windows for Workgroups 3.11 pre-installed; HP mouse and keyboard included. *Features included with some models. [1]List price, dealer prices may vary. Monitor not included. [2]Other capacities available. [3]First year on-site, 24-hour service. Second and third year return to dealer. [4]Available 9/1/94. [5]With permission CRN/Benchmark. MS-DOS is a U.S. registered trademark and Windows is a trademark of Microsoft Corporation. Pentium and the Intel Inside logo are U.S. trademarks of Intel Corporation. PPG403 ©1994 Hewlett-Packard Company

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Gone are the days when your work came to a grinding halt because you were working in a PC environment and someone passed you vital information on a Macintosh disk. Conversions Plus allows you to put a Mac in your PC, open it, convert documents between PC and Macintosh software automatically, and save Mac files to the disk – all while retaining the original formatting, **including** embedded graphics. You can even format Mac disks on your PC! External cables and cards are unnecessary. Just load the Conversions Plus software and stop your Mac to PC troubles from mounting, instantly. To learn more about Conversions Plus, and its more than 1000 file translation paths, **call us at 800-240-0030.**

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Circle 124 on reader service card.

COMPUSA THE COMPUTER SUPERSTORE

COMPUTER City

MicroWAREHOUSE

EGGHEAD SOFTWARE North America's Software Eggperts

FreeHand 4.0 for Windows

Attack of the Killer Bezagons

USABILITY: *Inscrutable no more.* ★★★
TECHNOLOGY: *OLE 2.0, better text, drag-and-drop everything.* ★★★★
VERDICT: *Easy-to-use tools, but not cheap.* ★★★

Overwhelmed by the bulk of CorelDraw? Turned off by the elitist cachet of Adobe's Illustrator? Find Aldus FreeHand far too complicated?

Relief is in sight: Aldus FreeHand 4.0 for Windows struts its technical stuff without forcing you through the byzantine procedures of previous versions of the program. Gone are dozens of the dialog boxes you once had to navigate to perform common tasks. In their place are floating tool palettes and neat new objects like bezagons. To directly edit objects, Aldus has added the Inspector, never more than a key combination (Ctrl-I) away. But not only is the product a lot easier to use, it's now stronger, too.

Inspector Gadget The Inspector's contents change depending on the highlighted object. When you click on a text selection, for example, the Inspector shows details such as alignment or width. Click on a group of objects, and it shows their dimensions and other attributes. The Inspector window also has its own button bar for quick access to a number of fine-tuning controls.

Layer controls, color and tint settings, and styles are all available as toolboxes, which roll up (like their counterparts in CorelDraw) to a title bar when you don't need them.

The interface sports drag-and-drop support: To apply just about any attribute from the Style, Tint, Color Mixer, or other toolbox to an object onscreen, simply drag the attribute onto the object. Changing an attribute shared by many objects is just as easy. For example, to change all red objects in a painting to purple, create the new color in the tint palette and drag it on top of red in the color palette.

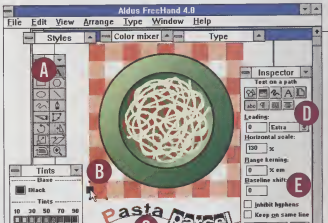
More Control What about real power? FreeHand 4.0 packs plenty. There's a slew of new drawing tools, including the polygon and the bezagon (a polygon with bezier points).

Text controls have also been improved. The tool for evening out two columns of text makes FreeHand a natural for creating tables. The program features added versatility in page layout as well: You can now combine different page sizes in a document, which is useful if you want to put business cards and letterhead in a single file.

Want to try your hand at freehand text? There's a calligraphic tool that enables you to set its nib width and write away (a drawing tablet helps here). When you're done, a command connects the intersections your line makes with itself.

FreeHand 4.0 doesn't have enough juice to lure away current Illustrator users. But if you want to avoid the overkill of Corel's leviathan, FreeHand has the power and simplicity to make the leap worthwhile.

MATTHEW J. LAKE



A. New **tool palettes** for colors, tints, text, styles, and more roll up to title bars to give you room to work.

B. Drag and drop is the natural way to work—create your color, tint, or style, then apply it to any object.

C. Type straight onto the screen, then apply all kinds of **text styles**—such as curved baselines or formatting—and edit at will.

D. The **Inspector** crams information and controls into a small box with help from context buttons.

E. FreeHand 4.0 adds so many text controls that it will become your de facto table **layout tool.**

See-Through Colors: One nice but tough-to-find FreeHand feature works around PostScript's inability to handle color transparency. Hold down the Alt key as you select Arrange, Path Operations, Intersect, and the program will create a clone of the intersection with a mixture of each piece's colors. This isn't a unique feature—Illustrator has had it for a while—but it's sure an improvement over PostScript's limitations.

FILEBOX

FreeHand 4.0 for Windows

New Interface Features: Inspector dialog box, floating tools, roll-up tools, drag and drop.

New Graphics Features: Color and tint mixer dialog boxes, calligraphic pen effect.

Minimum RAM: 4MB.

Disk Footprint: 25MB.

$595
Aldus Corp.
(800) 274-7243, (206) 622-5500
Reader Service No. 624

Guide to the Ratings: ★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

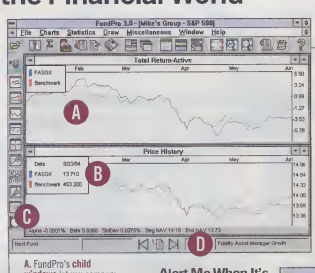
Windows on the Financial World

Shaken by the recent free fall in financial markets? Don't be. Investing is like bungee jumping: What goes down eventually comes back up. With that in mind, great buying opportunities brighten today's cloudy skies. The question is *what* to buy. Neither FundPro 3.0 for Windows nor Reuters Money Network for Quicken Users can give you the exact answers, but both can help you find those undiscovered investment gems.

Reuters Money Network is the Windows counterpart of Reality Technologies' DOS-based personal investor. But there's a twist: It taps your Quicken files (or any QIF file) as a shortcut to setting up and managing your personal portfolio. Reuters Money Network gives you the tools to track, analyze, and even purchase mutual funds, stocks, bonds, options, and bank CDs. By contrast, FundPro is tightly focused on mutual funds, which are the small investor's preferred vehicle.

FundPro's $400 price tag is cheap for its class, and at $10 on the street, Reuters Money Network may as well be free. But neither is much use unless you also subscribe to regular financial updates via the companies' online data services. For these, figure another $13 to $25 a month, depending on your information appetite.

Scope and Speed In spite of its low cost, Reuters Money Network seems the richer program. It lets you dabble in a wider range of financial instruments with a bounty of useful services, including investment alerts and market briefs—even your own personalized electronic newspaper clippings from the *Wall Street Journal* and other must-reads for investment data.



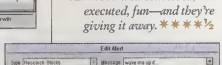
A. FundPro's **child windows** let you compare indicators.

B. Legend windows display select data.

C. Critical **statistical footnotes** appear at bottom of screen.

D. Navigation buttons let you maneuver easily within your portfolio.

Alert Me When It's Over: Don't want to read ticker tape? Let Reuters' Alert Manager wake you if a stock's earnings hit a new high, a mutual fund manager quits, or a lawsuit is filed. Just try to get your broker to do that for you.



must-reads for investment data.

But FundPro is much easier to use, offering an incomparable array of statistical indicators. Some are basic but would take hours to glean from individual sources—price history, relative strength, alpha and beta percentages, standard deviation. Others are so esoteric—RSI, Stochastic, MACD—that just being able to pronounce them wins you a seat on the exchange.

Reuters Money Network alerts you when an investment hits a certain price or when milestones are reached. Just try wringing this level of personal service from your broker.

Reuters Money Network and FundPro both have crisp, attractive interfaces that fully exploit Windows to put the tools in your hand to help you navigate reams of confusing market data. FundPro's special genius is that it conveys a great deal of information on one or multiple funds using totally flexible chart windows.

Lay Your Money Down FundPro's chart orientation, depth, and right-on tutorial make it more informative and easier to learn and use. Reuters Money Network, on the other hand, is less expensive, covers markets FundPro doesn't, and applies truly innovative technology. But unless you have a screamingly fast PC, its huge databases will really hamper your system's performance.

Choose FundPro if mutual funds are your preference and you enjoy the easy life. Try Reuters Money Network if you want to branch out from there. If you have the time and money, buy both. MIKE HOGAN

FundPro

USABILITY: *Tame the stock market with a heavy dose of intuition.* ****

TECHNOLOGY: *Good, balanced combination of standard and esoteric indicators.* ***

VERDICT: *How can such a powerful application be so easy to use?* ****½

Money Network

USABILITY: *Navigate acres of convoluted market stats with ease.* ***

TECHNOLOGY: *Smart Quicken link, downloads data and news clips.* ****

VERDICT: *Well conceived, well executed, fun—and they're giving it away.* ****½

FILEBOX

FundPro 3.0 for Windows

Requirements: 8MB of disk space, 4MB of RAM.

$400, plus $25/month for daily fund data updates
Manhattan Analytics
(800) 251-3863, (310) 374-2142
Reader Service No. 625

Reuters Money Network for Quicken Users

Requirements: 8MB of disk space, 4MB of RAM.

$24.95
Mutual-fund–oriented Gold Plan with some stock quotes and broker access, $12.95/month; Omnibus Platinum Plan, $18.95/month, plus additional service costs
Reality Technologies
(800) 521-2471
Reader Service No. 626

Guide to the Ratings: ***** *Excellent* **** *Good* *** *Acceptable* ** *Poor* * *Unacceptable*

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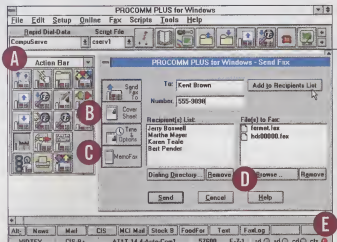
New! SOFTWARE
Procomm Plus 2.0 for Windows

USABILITY: *Finally looks and acts like a real Windows program.* ****
TECHNOLOGY: *Effortlessly combines faxing and data communications.* ****
VERDICT: *The old standard is still at the top of the heap.* ****

Push Your Modem to the Limit

Procomm has always been one of the best communications tools around. From its early shareware DOS genesis to its first Windows release, ProComm's been the standard by which communications programs are judged. But recently, Mustang Software's Qmodem Pro for Windows, another shareware descendant, and Delrina's Communications Suite shipped with useful features the aging Procomm for Windows lacked.

The latest version, Procomm Plus 2.0 for Windows, has all the fax functionality you could want. Unlike Qmodem Pro, Procomm Plus doesn't skimp on fax features, nor does it take the cumbersome two-program approach of Communications Suite. Instead, Procomm Plus is a highly functional, fun-to-use, integrated communications program that is sure to give your fax modem the workout it deserves.



A. Procomm's **Action Bars** are now customizable and you can position them anywhere.

B. You can launch Procomm's **cover sheet editor** and scheduler from the same screen.

C. The **MemoFax** feature lets you write and fax a note without using a separate word processor.

D. The robust **send-fax options** let you browse for recipients and files to be faxed.

E. Procomm now has useful software **modem lights.**

You've Come a Long Way, Baby: It's hard to believe this was once a DOS-based shareware program. You can expect to find all the communications basics you were used to in Version 1.0, but this isn't your father's Procomm Plus. Not only has Version 2.0 been beautified, it now includes a full suite of fax features that rival those of full-fledged fax programs. You can even use ProComm to set up your own fax-back service.

Timing Is Everything: Fax scheduling made easy—click on the calendar and clock to select the time you want your faxes sent.

You Look Mahvelous

While the new fax features are the meatiest addition, Procomm Plus also has some great usability tweaks. For example, the program now follows most Windows conventions—you won't have to fiddle with the awkward two-tier setup grid that made changing terminal emulation settings or switching file transfer protocols a mind-boggling adventure.

Procomm now features customizable button bars, including ones that are predefined for MCIMail and CompuServe, as well as a fax-specific button bar. Plus, there's now balloon help that pops up when you sweep your mouse over the buttons. (But why did DataStorm yank the handy key combination that let you page through the scrollback buffer?)

Procomm now cooperates with Windows' File Manager to give you drag-and-drop file transfers. You can upload files, whole directories, and even upload or start scripts by simply dragging the appropriate file from File Manager to the program window, or by dropping it on top of the minimized Procomm icon. And speaking of scripts, as you'd expect, Procomm Plus 2.0 will convert all your 1.0 scripts and dialing directories without a hitch.

Fax Maniacs We confess—we've gone into a faxing frenzy since we started using Procomm Plus. Like most fax packages, it lets you fax from within other applications by adding a faux printer driver. And it has all the other fax basics, including full send and receive functionality and a fax viewer and cover-sheet editor (both senselessly hidden under the Tools menu instead of under the Fax menu—but we're nit-picking again).

Pleasant surprises include sophisticated fax features like polling, which checks remote fax machines for received faxes. But best of all, in host mode Procomm now includes a fax-back feature that lets users dial in and request faxes to be sent to them. Of course, you can specify which faxes to make available to callers.

For all but the most die-hard BBS surfers (for whom we recommend Qmodem Pro), Procomm Plus 2.0 for Windows is the clear choice for all modem communications.

SHYAMALA REDDY

FILEBOX

Procomm Plus 2.0 for Windows

Number of Modem Models Supported: 565.

Number of Terminal Emulations Supported: 30.

The Competition: Only the WinComm Pro/WinFax Pro combo in Delrina's Communications Suite comes close, and it lacks the streamlined integration of Procomm Plus 2.0.

$179
Datastorm Technologies
(314) 443-3282
Reader Service No. 627

Guide to the Ratings: ***** *Excellent* **** *Good* *** *Acceptable* ** *Poor* * *Unacceptable*

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New! SOFTWARE: Scan/US

Shhhh! It Knows Where You Live

USABILITY: *Neat map-based interface, good documentation.* ★★★
TECHNOLOGY: *Clever tie-in between geography and data.* ★★★
VERDICT: *Offers information and analysis you can't afford to do without.* ★★★★

If you can't target your customers with cross-hair accuracy, your marketing plans—no matter how creative—will fail. To distribute materials efficiently, plan branch office locations, and target direct mailings, you need accurate demographic information fast.

Your choices? Spend thousands (or tens of thousands) of dollars for a custom report from a demographer, or fork over just $695 for Scan/US's geomarket software for Windows and make an unlimited number of custom reports for yourself. Not a tough choice.

All You Need Scan/US is a serious data arsenal for marketers, sales professionals, or just about anyone who needs accurate customer demographics. Suppose your target market is college-educated 35- to 45-year-olds earning $60,000 or more per year, and you want to know where they live. Scan/US pinpoints this market down to county, city, zip code—even 1/16-square-mile accuracy.

The program comes with figures from the most recent census (1990) and projections based on it. In the base package, all the census variables you might need are covered, including population trends, race, age, and labor force data.

Beyond basic demographics, there are figures that include household and family income, school enrollment, and education by race. And if you need to know median house prices in a given area, you can get some idea of that, too—although fast-changing data like this isn't always correctly tracked by the census department.

Added to the demographics are geographical snippets that go beyond county and state lines. The U.S. Interstate road network, cities, and large shopping malls are covered in the program's various views.

You can also add data of your own to the program pai lessly. If you have a database of clients with zip codes, you can import Excel, DBF, or ASCII data and have it recognized right away. And Scan/US sells packs of business-related data, such as shopping mall break downs and zip codes, separately.

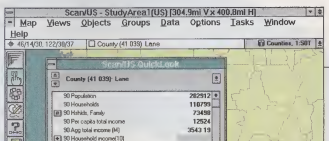
It's just as easy to export data. We produced an information-dense report in minutes by exporting regional demographic information to a spreadsheet and formatting the data a little. For researching business proposals, it's a godsend.

You're new to demographics? Don't worry about it—the program's clear primer and the accompanying subscriptions to *Business Geographics* and *American Demographics* magazines get you started. And the easy map-based Windows layout, while a little fussy at first, is less overwhelming once you get used to it.

Floppy Overload The main drawback of Scan/US? It comes on more than a dozen floppies—with more to come when you add data packs. A more efficient scheme would be CD-ROM distribution with key-code encryption for additional data.

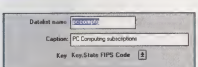
The question about this product is not whether to buy it—we recommend Scan/US for anyone who makes business decisions based on the location of a market—but when to buy it. Be sure to pick it up before your next big marketing project, and upgrade it every year with new projections.

MATTHEW J. LAKE



Read It All: You can plug in your own figures from spreadsheets, databases, or text files, because Scan/US can read Excel, DBF, and ASCII data files directly—there's no importing necessary. For reports, you can export Scan/US data, too.

Making Sense of Data: The core is Scan/US's database. Based on the 1990 census, with projected figures for years after that, it includes data organized by population trend, race, age, and labor force—plus household and family income, school enrollment, and median house prices. Once you've figured out whom you want to reach, you can see where your marks live in relation to geographical landmarks, like highways and shopping malls.



FILEBOX

Scan/US

Memory Required: 3MB of RAM.

Hard-Disk Footprint: 14MB.

Imports Data From: Excel, DBF, and ASCII formats.

Data Included: 1990 census figures and this year's projections for family and household income, school enrollment, education, housing prices, shopping malls, U.S. Interstate road networks, and zip codes.

$695
Scan/US
(800) 272-2687, (310) 820-1581
Reader Service No. 710

Guide to the Ratings: ★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

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New! SOFTWARE: PagePlus 3.0

Dad, Can I Borrow the DTP?

USABILITY: *Surprisingly easy to use.* ****
PERFORMANCE: *Slow to load documents and import files.* ***
TECHNOLOGY: *Lacks long-document features.* ***
VERDICT: *Great value.* ****

When Serif's PagePlus grows up, it wants to be a high-end desktop publisher. With Version 3.0, it's stuck in that awkward teenage stage—way too powerful to fit in the low-end market, and not seasoned enough to go to bat against the more mature Aldus PageMaker and QuarkXPress.

But PagePlus 3.0 is a sleek, sharp, hormone-ridden powerhouse of a program that is perfect for those who lust after some of those grown-up DTP features but find the price and complexity of PageMaker or QuarkXPress daunting. For just $59.95, PagePlus gives you the power to create stunning documents using text rotation, irregular text wraps, and color separation—all complex features that nearly put PagePlus in competition with those much more expensive products.

With Version 3.0, you'll find some welcome enhancements, including automatic page numbering and hyphenation, an integrated word processor, running headers and footers, tabs, tab leaders, and master pages.

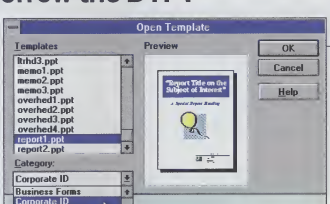
PagePlus 3.0 even includes some indispensable features that, unbelievably, you won't find in the higher-priced PageMaker, including a thesaurus, a JPEG import filter, a word and character counter, and a print preview window. (You can, however, find these features in QuarkXPress.) The table editor also works better than PageMaker's. In addition, Serif has added enough ease-of-use enhancements to make learning the program a snap—without ever having to crack open a manual.

Peer Pressure Although PagePlus really packs in the goodies now, it still has only about half the features and controls of PageMaker or QuarkXPress. Most notably, PagePlus lacks helpful long-document features such as indexing, table of contents generation, and multifile book building. This program is simply not designed for those kinds of tasks. Also missing is the capability to open more than one document at a time without running multiple versions of the application. Other high-end options and refinements are either watered down or missing.

PagePlus still has its ChangeBar floating palette, Serif's version of PageMaker's Control palette and QuarkXPress's Measurements palette. All of these let you format text or modify objects without opening menus, but the PagePlus version is clunkier and less comprehensive than those of the other programs.

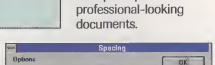
The WritePlus text editor, similar to PageMaker's story editor, lets you define paragraph styles and font characteristics (such as boldface and italics), but you can't change fonts without reapplying styles, a real usability blunder. PagePlus also lacks PageMaker's automatic baseline leading option, which precisely controls where the first baseline of text falls—something serious designers need.

Not Too Shabby Nonetheless, PagePlus 3.0 is an awesome deal for the money. When it comes to price, its competitor is really the $139 Microsoft Publisher, which has a Page Wizard that beats PagePlus in the ease-of-use category. But PagePlus is much more powerful. For the price, it's an excellent program. **BOB WEIBEL**



Terrific Templates: You won't find this PagePlus document preview feature in the higher-end packages like PageMaker or QuarkXPress. And Serif provides a generous variety of document templates, which make it simple to produce professional-looking documents.

Limited Space: PagePlus 3.0 has some shortcomings when you compare it to PageMaker or QuarkXPress. For instance, it doesn't let you enter absolute values for Paragraph and Space Above settings. Rather, you're forced to enter percentages into the Spacing section. This method makes it practically impossible to have any creative formatting and simultaneously make sure your baseline text aligns across all columns.



FILEBOX

PagePlus 3.0

System Requirements: Microsoft Windows 3.1 or later; 2MB of memory; 4MB of hard-disk space, 12MB for full installation.

Competition: Version 3.0 pushes PagePlus ahead of PFS: Publisher and Publish It for Windows, leaving Microsoft Publisher as its strongest competitor.

Extras: Imports Photo CD and JPEG-compressed images, OLE 1.0 client, TWAIN scanner support.

$59.95; $99.95 for the Publishing Suite, including DrawPlus, TypePlus, TablePlus, and PhotoPlus collection
Serif
(800) 697-3743, (603) 889-8650
Reader Service No. 628

Guide to the Ratings: ***** *Excellent* **** *Good* *** *Acceptable* ** *Poor* * *Unacceptable*

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New! SOFTWARE: OmniPage Professional 5.0 vs. WordScan Plus 3.0

The Strong, Silent Typists

Say you have a pile of printed documents on your desk that you need on disk. You can hire a typist or pick up a scanner—but if you're dissatisfied with the scanner's OCR bundle, where do you turn next? To the professional-strength new versions of Caere's OmniPage Professional 5.0 for Windows and Calera Recognition Systems' WordScan Plus 3.0.

Both products use nonlinear neural-net recognition techniques—which means that they offer improved recognition rates on even the ugliest documents. Both have also had facelifts that enhance their ease of use. In the case of WordScan, its recognition engine remains unaltered since the last time we reviewed it (see "Calera's Souped-Up New WordScan—Faster, Slicker OCR," New! December 1993, page 103), with only OLE 2.0 support, interface changes, and $100 off the list price to mark the upgrade. OmniPage, however, ships with a new OCR engine, as well as an image editing program.

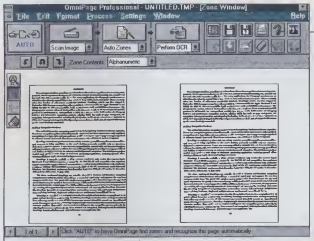
Our OCR test suite included photocopied and reduced four-column magazine articles, as well as text-and-graphic documents riddled with tiny fonts. On all but the most cluttered and illegible of these, both programs made the same small number of mistakes—about 20 out of every 1,050 words. On simple 12-point Courier print, they made almost no mistakes. Lower-priced neural-net OCR programs, such as Xerox Imaging Systems' $99 TextBridge, are not as accurate or as fast on complex documents.

OmniPotent Formatting and page layout are OmniPage Professional's strengths. Its new built-in text editor retains the formatting of the original document like a pro—even on extremely complex layouts with variable text sizes. Its integrated Image Assistant graphics editing software is also a boon worth noting.

A Fair Clip OmniPage's downfall is its default speed setting. When we threw it some really complex documents, it ran about a third slower than WordScan Plus. Some of WordScan's speed advantage, however, is lost in proofing time, because it can't match OmniPage's formatting and page-layout strengths on degraded pages. With the test magazine article, for example, WordScan Plus was as accurate as OmniPage, but it inaccurately translated fonts and font sizes in many places. By contrast, OmniPage proved to be nearly perfect at maintaining the formatting of documents.

Want a familiar interface? WordScan Plus has it, no matter what software you use. Its chameleonlike interface mimics the standard toolbar and dialog boxes of your suite-based Windows applications—whichever suite it may be. Just select the name of your word processor—Word for Windows, WordPerfect, or Ami Pro—during installation. And here's another plus: You can start the OCR process from the File menu of your other apps.

Both WordScan Plus and OmniPage are generally fast, accurate, familiar, and simple to use—although WordScan Plus has a slight speed and usability edge. However, if you want to retain your scanned pages' formatting, Professional is the clear choice. DAVID HASKIN



Now You See It: The toolbar of Caere's OmniPage Professional enables one-click recognition for simple pages (as shown above) or meticulous step-by-step work for ultracomplex page layouts.

Look Familiar? Calera's WordScan Plus mimics the toolbar of your favorite Windows applications (like Word for Windows, shown here) and connects to them using OLE 2.0.

OmniPage

USABILITY: *Configurable, clear settings.* ****
PERFORMANCE: *Default settings drag.* ***
TECHNOLOGY: *Neural-net accuracy.* ****
VERDICT: *OmniPage for formatting.* ****

WordScan

USABILITY: *Mimics your other apps.* ****
PERFORMANCE: *Recognition rates faster, but requires more proofing time.* ***
TECHNOLOGY: *The same neural-net accuracy.* ****
VERDICT: *WordScan for speed.* ****

FILEBOX

OmniPage Professional 5.0

Memory Required: 8MB of RAM.

Operating System: Windows 3.1 or later.

$695
Caere Corp.
(800) 535-7226, (408) 395-7000
Reader Service No. 629

WordScan Plus 3.0

Memory Required: 4MB of RAM.

Operating System: Windows 3.1 or later.

$595, $249 without Popup Verifier or multipage support
Calera Recognition Systems
(800) 395-7000, (408) 720-8300
Reader Service No. 630

Guide to the Ratings: ***** *Excellent* **** *Good* *** *Acceptable* ** *Poor* * *Unacceptable*

5

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New! SOFTWARE: DesignCAD 2D Windows Version 7.0

USABILITY: *Custom tool collections and named macros win the usability crown.* ***
TECHNOLOGY: *Limited to 2-D elevations, but laden with features.* **
VERDICT: *The CAD low-price leader of the low end.* ***

DesignCAD Cleans Up Windows

In the realm of high-end CAD, Autodesk's AutoCAD is the king of the heap. Downscale a bit from this powerhouse are less-capable and much less expensive CAD programs such as AutoCAD LT ($495). Then there's DesignCAD 2D Windows, Version 7.0 from American Small Business Computers. At $349, it's even less expensive than AutoCAD, but in many ways, it's superior.

Despite its bargain-basement price, DesignCAD 2D Windows has an upscale feature set. It has the same excellent capabilities and BasicCAD programming language as its DOS ancestor, as well as several features new to this release. For example, you can now name up to 256 layers and choose object handles before selecting the command—much more intuitive than the old way.

Other additions include fixed-scale hatch patterns that don't change when you resize a drawing and a print preview that lets you adjust margins, scale and fit drawings, and even preview multipage documents.

Design Issues DesignCAD also lets you tailor the user interface with a nicely designed Options dialog box. Another big usability bonus is that any macros you make are now known by names instead of code numbers—at last.

But the most helpful feature—one that all CAD packages should implement—is the invaluable InfoBox. This dialog box pops up when you double-click on an object, and it displays everything DesignCAD knows about it. You inspect or modify any object attribute (color, line type, area, you name it) directly from the InfoBox.

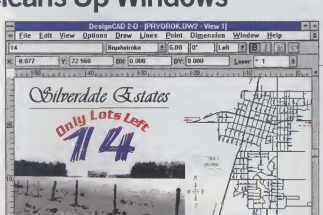
Like any CAD program, DesignCAD 2D Windows Version 7.0 uses DXF and IGES formats for exchanging drawings with other CAD programs—though it does not support the DWG format that's rapidly gaining acceptance. It also imports HPGL plot files and ASCII files containing *x*-axis and *y*-axis coordinates, and exports drawings in WPG format for WordPerfect.

There are some things this DesignCAD cannot do. It's not possible to load more than one drawing at a time, although you can merge files and open multiple views on the same drawing. And because it's purely 2-D, the program has no tools to aid you with orthographic or isometric drawing.

Moving Right Along Coming down the pike are a couple of new technological improvements that will likely affect your decision to buy DesignCAD 2D Windows.

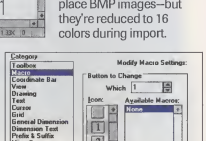
First, if the lack of DWG support is enough to keep your signature off the purchase order, don't hesitate long. Support is currently under development for a forthcoming product and will be introduced into DesignCAD 2D when it's ready. Second, the new product in development is a 3-D version of DesignCAD Windows. So if you really wanted 3-D and you were considering DesignCAD 2D Windows just to make the move to Windows, hold off until fall.

But if you don't need 3-D features or some of those high-end gizmos, then the low-priced DesignCAD 2D Windows Version 7.0 makes an excellent choice. **RALPH GRABOWSKI**



Looking Good: Want more than flat plans and wire-frame fonts? Use TrueType and PostScript fonts in DesignCAD 2D's drawings. Unlike fonts in AutoCAD LT, these look good and can be sized and placed along a curve. You can also place BMP images—but they're reduced to 16 colors during import.

Design Your Interface: DesignCAD 2D's Options dialog box lets you customize the program's interface. You can add macros or other frequently used commands to the toolbar or to other floating custom toolboxes. Just drag and drop the command icons where you want them. And at the top of everyone's wish list: macros on the toolbar. Just pick a macro from the included list, pick an icon, and you're on your way to task automation.



FILEBOX

DesignCAD 2D Windows Version 7.0

Minimum RAM: 2MB.

Hard-Disk Footprint: 3MB.

Key Improvements: Clean, usable interface, handy InfoBox, named macros, ability to open multiple views of a drawing, library of more than 500 symbols.

Imports: DXF, IGES, HPGL, ASCII.

Exports: DXF, IGES, WPG, PCX, GEM, PostScript.

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Guide to the Ratings: ***** *Excellent* **** *Good* *** *Acceptable* ** *Poor* * *Unacceptable*

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Keycode #11XDC

New! **SOFTWARE: Act 2.0 for Windows**

Keep Your Eye on the Ball

USABILITY: *Fast and powerful, yet easy to use for managing contacts and schedules.* ****
TECHNOLOGY: *Biggest shortcoming is lack of customizability.* ***
VERDICT: *Ease of use and e-mail integration make it a sound purchase.* ****

Business is a rough game. The rules aren't fair. But there are some secrets that can keep you one step ahead of the competition. Think of them as using your hands in soccer when no one's looking—only these secrets are legal.

We think everybody whose business is based on repeated personal contact with customers should use contact management software. It's an excellent way to make sure you always have control of the ball. One of the best is Symantec's Act 2.0 for Windows. The new version has a host of new features and greatly improved speed.

Track Record You can use Act in your day-to-day business life to track all of your interactions with people. It can record information on clients, maintain histories of your phone calls, even prompt you for follow-up calls. Act also lets you manage your schedule through an integrated calendar, write business letters with its integrated word processor, and maintain e-mail contact without having to leave the program. Yet it's still easy to use.

You'll most likely use two main screens with Act: the contact screen and the calendar screen. It's a snap to drag and drop between these two modules—for example, just drag a contact onto the calendar to schedule a lunchtime appointment. On any given day, the calendar lets you view both timed and timeless activities (such as scheduled appointments and to-do items), which is tough to do with PIMs such as Polaris's PackRat.

You can customize the individual fields on your contact screen, but you can't go beyond two pages of data per contact. Additionally, you can't see both pages at the same time, and we found it tedious to toggle back and forth between the two pages.

Getting Together Act now lets you define groups of contacts—a real boon for scheduling, e-mail, and performing mail merges. And with Delrina's WinFax Pro and your predefined groups, you can perform a fax merge (this is similar to a mail merge in your word processor, except that you fax documents rather than print them).

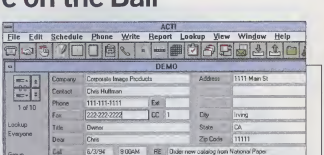
New to Act 2.0 is network and e-mail support. The program is now compatible with Novell's NetWare, Artisoft's LANtastic, and Microsoft's Windows for Workgroups. You can also integrate Act with cc:Mail and Microsoft Mail to easily send messages and attach any scheduled activity, such as a meeting. Despite network security, including individual passwords, log-in IDs, and three security levels, Act's network features still pale by comparison to its competitor, GoldMine (see "Keep Your Contacts in Place," June 1994, page 86).

Act's importing capabilities are much stronger in Version 2.0. To be specific, they really work. For example, if you add a number of contacts to your database while you're on the road, synchronizing that information with your existing database in the office is much more reliable than it had been in earlier versions.

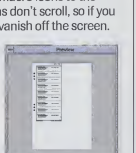
Act's icon bar could still use some work. Reduced from 19 to 17 unremovable buttons, it still doesn't leave much room for user-generated macros. If you add more macro buttons than it can display at one time, the icon bar doesn't scroll or grow a second tier—your macros simply vanish offscreen.

Act lets you print using the formats of popular schedulers, such as DayRunner, to take your information on the go. The only drawback to this is the print preview—the thumbnails are too tiny to let you distinguish between similar forms.

Despite these minor shortcomings, Act 2.0 for Windows is a fine product. Most outstanding is its ease of use. The program does lack some security features and resource management tools. But its network and e-mail enhancements make it a winning solution for corporate offices. BARRY BRENESAL



Individual Icons: The contact manager Act 2.0 for Windows lets you add your own macro icons to the button bar. But beware! The icons don't scroll, so if you have too many to display, they'll vanish off the screen.



Paltry Preview: You'll find new printing templates in Act 2.0 for envelopes and popular address books, welcome additions over Version 1.0. However, the thumbnail preview is so small, it's practically useless.

FILEBOX

Act 2.0 for Windows

Competitors: GoldMine, CrossTies, Maximizer, SuperOffice.

Requirements: Windows 3.1 or later, 4MB of RAM, 5MB of hard-disk space.

Import Options: dBASE or comma-delimited ASCII. Act now transfers DOS-based formats to Windows.

E-mail Support: cc:Mail, CompuServe, MS Mail.

Noteworthy: Manage your e-mail with the Briefcase.

$279.95; upgrade, $69.95
Symantec Corp.
(800) 441-7234, (408) 253-9600
Reader Service No. 612

Guide to the Ratings: ***** *Excellent* **** *Good* *** *Acceptable* ** *Poor* * *Unacceptable*

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Keycode #11XDD

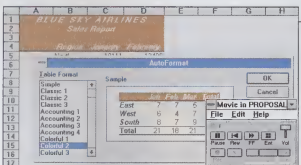
New! SOFTWARE: ScreenCam 1.1 for Windows

Moving Screen Shots That Talk

USABILITY: *Few features, but easy to learn.* ★★★
TECHNOLOGY: *Records voice and screen.* ★★★
VERDICT: *Fastest demo-maker on earth.* ★★★★

Here's how *not* to create in-house software training or demos: Hire a $50-an-hour programmer, put up with weeks of revisions, then trash the whole project when it turns out wrong. Instead, we recommend you invest in Lotus Development's ScreenCam 1.1 for Windows and do the whole thing yourself in less time than it takes to sign a programmer's contract.

ScreenCam records movies of screen activities, along with a soundtrack so you can explain what you're doing. The process is simple: Click on the Record button, start operating the software you want to demo, and record your voice-over at the same time. Then save the file in Lotus's proprietary ScreenCam Movie format and distribute it with the free run-time ScreenCam player. Alternatively, you can combine the player with the SCM movie to make a one-off, self-running executable file.



Screen, Camera, Action: Run ScreenCam movies from any OLE-aware application. This movie, embedded in an Excel document, is only a double-click away. To distribute a movie, use Lotus Notes or any e-mail package that can serve as an OLE client.

ScreenCam movies require lots of storage—up to 1.5MB per three minutes—and there's no way to compress a movie's soundtrack to shrink its file. In fact, about the only way to save disk space is to record at low VGA resolution and low color depth. Apart from ScreenCam's lack of file compression, its most significant drawback is that its SCM files cannot be edited. Future releases will probably address this problem, but for now it's like this: Make a mistake, start over. If the ability to edit your movies or record just part of the screen is important to you, try ScreenCam's competitor, Motion Works International's CameraMan 2.0 for Windows ($149). It creates Video for Windows AVI files that you can edit by using Adobe Premiere or another video editing program.

ScreenCam's appeal to technical support staff and computer instructors is clear. It doesn't get any easier than this—mainly because tricky movie editing isn't possible. YAEL LI-RON

FILEBOX

ScreenCam 1.1 for Windows

Requirements: A 386 with Windows 3.1 and 1.2MB of hard-disk space; a 486 is recommended for making recordings with adequate playback speed; sound card and microphone for audio I/O required.

$79
Lotus Development Corp.
(800) 343-5414
Reader Service No. 633

Multimedia Cloaking

Memory Management to Remember

USABILITY: *No user interface, no problems.* ★★★★
PERFORMANCE: *Regain 70K of memory.* ★★★★
TECHNOLOGY: *DOS-proof memory tricks.* ★★★★½
VERDICT: *All memory gain, no performance pain.* ★★★★

As memory managers have improved, RAM cram has given way to another memory lapse—upper-memory cram.

Helix Software has come to the rescue of your beleaguered upper memory with a set of three utilities geared to revving up multimedia systems. Multimedia Cloaking consists of a CD-ROM driver to replace Microsoft's MSCDEX, a disk cache like DOS's SmartDrive that also handles CD-ROM caching, and a small-footprint mouse driver. What's the big deal about a bunch of tools you got for free when you bought MS-DOS? All three of Multimedia Cloaking's tools take up only 8K of conventional memory and no upper memory at all. Apart from the tiny 8K rub, the rest of the utilities run under 32-bit protected mode in extended RAM.

In our tests of Multimedia Cloaking, we won back 22K more RAM under 640K and 50K more RAM in upper memory—more than 70K that DOS-based apps could use for themselves. And our informal tests of the disk cache support Helix's claims that its CD-ROM caching is faster than DOS 6.2's SmartDrive.

Best of all, the cloaking system isn't tied to any specific memory manager. The utilities worked with DOS's EMM386, QEMM-386, 386Max, and, of course, Helix's own Netroom.

On any system suffering from bloated CD-ROM drivers, the utilities in Multimedia Cloaking are keepers—until Chicago ships, anyway. And even then, there could still be a place for smart system management like this. RON WHITE

FILEBOX

Multimedia Cloaking

Utilities: CD-ROM driver (to supersede MSCDEX), disk and CD-ROM cache, mouse driver.

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Helix Software
(800) 451-0551; (718) 392-3100
Reader Service No. 634

Guide to the Ratings: ★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

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Keycode #11XDE

#1 in the independent VeriTest Steeplechase Battery test.[1] In fact, the Dell Latitude XP destroyed the previous battery life record by almost 5 hours.

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New record

Dell Latitude XP 50MHz STN
Steeplechase: 17 hours, 5 minutes

Typical VeriTest Steeplechase Results[1]
[Testing with power management. Actual battery life will vary with configuration and usage.]

	hrs:mins
Compaq Contura 4/25c (SL/25) passive	4:32
IBM ThinkPad 755Cs (DX4/75) TFT	5:00
Toshiba T4800ct (DX4/75) TFT	5:30
IBM ThinkPad 500 (486/slc) mono	6:30
IBM ThinkPad 350C (SL/25) passive	8:50
Previous record for 486 mono	12:07
NEW RECORDS:	
Dell Latitude, 2 batteries DX2/50 STN	12:15
Dell Latitude XP DX4/100 TFT	14:48
Dell Latitude XP DX2/50 STN	17:05

No you've come down here to find out about this Steeplechase thing. Well, it's not a horse race, but a thorough test of battery life. The Steeplechase test includes mechanical typing, pausing, task switching and printing in MS Windows v3.1, MS Word for Windows v6.0 and MS Excel v5.0. All numbers represent an average of at least two trials with power management functions enabled. Test simulates executive usage, i.e. carrying notebook between meetings and intermittent use. Competitors' times are published in Portable Computing Magazine. For a complete copy of the VeriTest results, call our TechFax™ line at 800-950-1329. [2]This 3-year limited warranty consists of Dell's standard return-to-factory warranty during the first year, plus 1-year of next-business-day on-site service provided by Pancfic Service Corp. during the first year, plus a 2-year parts only contract for years 2 & 3. [3]Latitude XP is powered by one Lithium Ion battery. Latitude is powered by a NiMH battery, with the option of replacing the floppy drive with a second NiMH battery, which will increase the weight of the Latitude by 0.3 lbs. [4]Prices valid in the U.S. only. Some products and promotions may not be available outside the U.S. Prices subject to change without notice. [5]Business leasing arranged by Leasing Group, Inc. *Intel and the Intel Inside logo are registered trademarks and DX4, DX2 and SX are trademarks of Intel Corp. Dell disclaims proprietary interest in the marks and names of others. ©1994 Dell Computer Corporation. All rights reserved.*

intel inside

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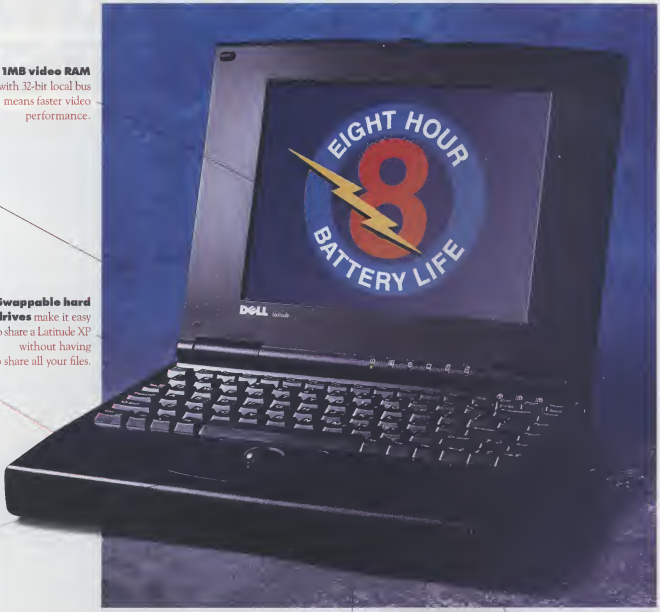

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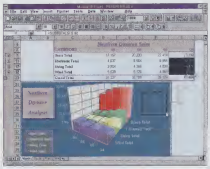

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Microsoft Office

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June 1994

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Circle 184 on reader service card.

LANstep 2.0

One Step Forward, One Step Back

LANstep 2.0 is Hayes Microcomputer's bold attempt to break the boundaries of traditional PC networking. Neither completely peer-to-peer like Artisoft's LANtastic nor server-based like Novell's NetWare, it's an unorthodox combination of some of the best features from both worlds. But its implementation requires a little too much commitment to its clever architecture for us to recommend it wholeheartedly.

LANstep acts like a peer-to-peer network in that your primary and any secondary servers don't theoretically have to be dedicated to the task. However, in practice you'll find you get the best results from dedicating at least the primary server. It may be counter to Hayes's philosophy of network services, but LANstep servers are highly resource-intensive compared to other peer-to-peer networks, hogging not just 50K of conventional RAM but also 1.5MB of extended memory.

Name Calling You may be willing to forgive this resource gluttony in light of the fact that LANstep is the only low-end NOS that implements directory services: Instead of having to log on to individual servers, users simply log on to the network, call up resources by logical names, and LANstep connects them to the right server.

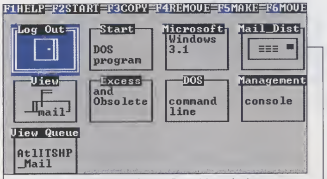
LANstep has a unique design—on the primary server, you actually need to load the LANstep operating system before DOS. This means that an administrator must know both LANstep and MS-DOS well. For instance, to evaluate a server's hard-drive capacity, Hayes recommends that you boot the server with a DOS floppy and use FDISK and CHKDSK. On the other hand, LANstep eschews the centralized server model by decentralizing file security. Rather than using an access control bindery (like NetWare) that can be destroyed or hacked into, LANstep embeds the access rights for each file into the files themselves.

Hard to Handle Getting LANstep to work with network applications or with other networks can be difficult. While it supports NetBIOS applications, you must manually edit a workstation's PROTOCOL.INI file to turn on this support. LANstep supports Ethernet, ARCnet, and Token Ring network interface cards—in fact, any card with support for Network Driver Interface Specification (NDIS). You can even run other protocols under LANstep, such as NetWare's IPX. But that feature is cumbersome to set up, and even Hayes admits that LANstep is not the ideal choice for a workgroup that needs to be integrated into a larger heterogeneous network.

Nor is this network a good choice for Windows-centric users. LANstep's GUI-like, character-based interface is a throwback to the menu systems of the mid-1980s, and is woefully inadequate. If you move from one "icon" to another with the cursor keys, for example, you must also cursor through empty spaces that don't contain icons.

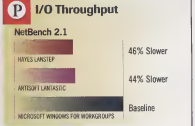
LANstep may be a different approach to an old idea, but then again, so was the new Coke. It has some notable advantages—distributed security and dynamic menus among them—but ultimately LANstep is not as useful a solution as either the client-server or peer-to-peer model it's trying to supplant.

STEVEN J. VAUGHAN-NICHOLS



Looks Aren't Everything: Sure it's ugly, but Hayes's LANstep network dynamically updates its DOS-based interface as you add and remove resources. While you have to use this interface for network management, you can use Windows' File Manager to access shared network directories.

Keeps Pace: Performance isn't the issue with LANstep. It's about as fast as Artisoft's LANtastic. On the other hand, it uses far more system resources.



USABILITY: *Interface is neither intuitive nor fast.* **
PERFORMANCE: *Comparable to most peer networks.* ***
TECHNOLOGY: *Has directory services . . .* ****
VERDICT: *. . . but you have to sacrifice to get them.* **

FILEBOX

LANstep 2.0

Server Memory Requirements: 50K of conventional memory, up to 1.5MB of extended memory.

Client Memory Requirements: 9K to 120K.

Primary File-Server Hard-Disk Footprint: 20MB.

Secondary Server Hard-Disk Footprint: 1MB.

Client Hard-Disk Footprint: 250K.

$595 (five users)
Hayes Microcomputer Products
(404) 441-1617
Reader Service No. 636

Guide to the Ratings: ***** *Excellent* **** *Good* *** *Acceptable* ** *Poor* * *Unacceptable*

New! NETWORKING
EtherWave and Silver Streak

Get Your Next LAN In a Can

Looking to create a portable network quickly? Now there are two alternatives to small hubs and thin Ethernet cable: Farallon Computing's EtherWave and Tut Systems' Silver Streak. These two products let you daisy-chain Ethernet nodes together with 10Base-T cable or phone wire, respectively.

Farallon's EtherWave transceivers are small squares, about three inches on a side and one inch thick. Each $129 unit connects to a PC with a 10Base-5 (thicknet) connector, and there are two RJ-45 ports to link it to 10Base-T (twisted-pair) wires. You can daisy-chain up to eight devices over 10Base-T, one of which can be a network hub (which effectively turns one hub port into eight). You're limited to a total cable length of 100 meters (about 328 feet)—10Base-T's standard length limit.

Bright Lights: Silver Streak (left) and EtherWave (right) both sport convenient LEDs.

Tut's $99 Silver Streak connector works on a similar principle but uses regular four-wire telephone cable and can daisy-chain up to 30 devices with a total cable length of 185 meters (approximately 607 feet). You can't connect it directly to a hub, however, and it requires that you terminate any open sockets with a small but easy-to-lose plug that Tut provides.

Both products make it possible to quickly cable together workstations. We tested them with a variety of Ethernet cards from 3Com, Intel, Compaq, Cabletron, and Socket. Network performance was unimpeded over the products as well.

Farallon and Tut have interesting solutions for small, portable LANs, and with Silver Streak starting at $99 and EtherWave at $129, they offer an inexpensive way to connect two or three computers. Because Silver Streak lets you string together up to 30 nodes and costs less than $100 per node, we'd choose it over EtherWave. But prices for eight-port 10Base-T Ethernet hubs start around $200. If you already have 10Base-T Ethernet cards, it may be less expensive to purchase a small, mobile hub than to outfit four to eight nodes with these transceivers.

Although the technology is interesting, we found that these products weren't really superior in terms of price or performance to existing physical layer solutions. However, if you haven't already invested in hubs or thin Ethernet, EtherWave and Silver Streak make for good, easy-to-use alternatives for smaller networks. JOHN MONTGOMERY

EtherWave

USABILITY: *Easy to daisy-chain workstations.* ★★★
TECHNOLOGY: *Still relies on 10Base-T wire.* ★★★
VERDICT: *Not as flexible or inexpensive as Silver Streak.* ★★★

Silver Streak

USABILITY: *Very simple installation.* ★★★
TECHNOLOGY: *Runs full-tilt Ethernet over cheap phone wire.* ★★★½
VERDICT: *Low cost, easy-to-use alternative to 10Base-T.* ★★★★

FILEBOX

EtherWave AUI Transceiver

$129
Farallon Computing
(510) 814-5100
Reader Service No. 637

Silver Streak AUI Connector

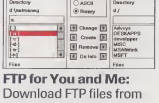
$99
Tut Systems
(800) 998-4888, (510) 682-6510
Reader Service No. 638

Internet Membership Kit

Training Wheels for the Infobahn

You say you want to join the Internet community but don't know where to start? Get yourself a modem or direct Internet connection and a copy of Ventana Media's Internet Membership Kit. For $70, Ventana's kit includes everything you need to send and receive e-mail and access any of the thousands of newsgroups worldwide.

Ventana includes two of the best Internet books around to get you started: *The Internet Yellow Pages* (Osborne, McGraw-Hill, 1994) and *The Windows Internet Tour Guide* (Ventana Press, 1994).



FTP for You and Me: Download FTP files from the Net using Ventana's Internet Membership Kit.

While these resource guides are excellent, the software leaves you hungry for more. Ventana bundles a sample of NetManage's Chameleon Sampler and a TCP/IP stack necessary for establishing a node on the Net, but the e-mail reader and news reader are nothing more than functional.

Ventana Press's great books make this kit worth considering. We just wish it included more (and better) software. Still, if you're new to the Net, the Internet Membership Kit is worth the price of admission. JOHN TASCHEK

USABILITY: *Scaled-down programs are a snap to use.* ★★★
TECHNOLOGY: *Chameleon's TCP/IP stack supports both dial-up and direct Net access.* ★★★★
VERDICT: *Worth it for the books alone.* ★★★

FILEBOX

Internet Membership Kit

Competition: Dozens of similar Net books.

$89.95
Ventana Media
(800) 209-3342, (919) 942-0220
Reader Service No. 639

Guide to the Ratings: ★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

Your Life.

Your Life Simplified.

Introducing Sidekick for Windows.
Finally, a card file, calendar, to-do list and note pad in one easy application that's so fast and functional, it can actually simplify your life.

Click on the Quick Menu button and Sidekick pops up on screen instantly. From any application.

New Sidekick speeds you to your important information unlike any personal organizer you've ever seen. Just click on its Quick Menu button from inside WordPerfect, Quattro Pro, or *any* other Windows application, and you can set appointment reminders, jot down to-do lists, call up phone numbers and addresses and more, instantly.

So don't wait to get organized. Try Sidekick for the special introductory price of only $34.95* on our 90-day money-back offer. And see how simple it is to simplify your life.

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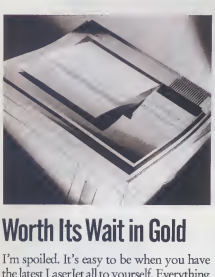
for Windows

Simplify™ *Software to Simplify Your Life. From Borland.* * Retail prices may vary. Includes $5.00 shipping and handling when ordering direct from Borland. Copyright © 1994 Borland International, Inc. All rights reserved. Simplify and Sidekick are trademarks of Borland International, Inc. BI-7528

Circle 113 on reader service card.

Logbook LONG-TERM TESTS: HP LaserJet 4 Plus • Ecco Professional



Worth Its Wait in Gold

I'm spoiled. It's easy to be when you have the latest LaserJet all to yourself. Everything about the LaserJet 4 Plus—its speedy 12-page-per-minute engine, excellent output quality, and affordable price—makes my printing painless. Unlike other printer technologies, laser is worth its upkeep cost—you'll never spend more than a few pennies per page, no matter what you're printing.

But here's the rub: While I'm a hardcore environmentalist, I hate the LaserJet's Power Save mode, which shuts down the printer's fuser when you haven't used it for a given amount of time. Don't get me wrong—I don't want a printer keeping itself warm for hours on end while I polish a story. But I'm not fond of twiddling my thumbs for the full minute it takes to warm up when I'm printing something I need for a meeting that started five minutes ago. Fortunately, you can turn off the Power Save feature—but my guilty conscience won't let me.

The printer "tells" me when I'm out of paper or when the front cover is open through bidirectional parallel communication. Unfortunately, this doesn't work on a LAN, and when I'm sitting right next to the printer, I'm annoyed when it points out the obvious. Fortunately, this is another option that can be turned off.

I'm ready to give the LaserJet 4 Plus a permanent home. If you need fast, reliable, great-looking output on or off a network, you should, too. KYLA K. CARLSON

LaserJet 4 Plus / Hewlett-Packard / (800) 752-0900 / $1,839
Circle No. 641 on Reader Service Card

Logbook Entries:

May 2, 1994: *I'm the envy of all in the office with my LaserJet 4 Plus laser printer. Granted, 12 pages per minute is more speed than one person needs, but what's a few ppm among friends?*

May 4,1994: *A powerful printer with a neat concealed paper tray. I'm glad a printer this big doesn't waste more desk real estate than necessary.*

June 13, 1994: *Fabulous 600-by-600-dpi output! I can squeeze oodles of small type into a spreadsheet and still read it without my glasses.*

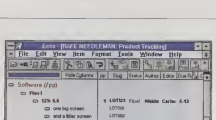
June 21,1994: *I don't need the online documentation often, but when I do, I'm stymied—it's cryptic and too technical to be user-friendly.*

Logbook Entries:

May 20, 1993: *The beta version of Ecco Profesional 1.0 arrives. Finally, a PIM that thinks the way I do: in lists. Slowly.*

July 12, 1993: *Ecco Professional 1.0 is officially released. It's still more workhorse than thoroughbred, but there's no competition if you're willing to sacrifice speed for features. And I am.*

April 20, 1994: *The new Ecco Professional 2.0 sports a great synchronization feature that keeps multiple versions of my main data file in lockstep between my office, home, and portable PCs. Also, new network support lets me use Ecco to read and handle meeting requests that come to me over Schedule+. Cool!*



Hooked on Ecco

I think in lists. I live in outlines. Ordinary PIMs don't do much for me. Most are underpowered, and they try to make up for it with childish little trash cans, bit-mapped binder rings, and other interface flotsam that clutter instead of organize.

Not Ecco Professional. I started using the program more than a year ago, and I still like it. I began moving my life into Ecco Pro shortly after 1.0 came out, and I'm up to 900K of data in my main file. The core of my information base is a mega-outline that tracks the products we cover, author and editor assignments, deadlines, and test schedules. No other PIM could handle this kind of data, and no database has Ecco's great drag-and-drop interface to move projects around.

Ecco also has the most easily modifiable toolbar of any Windows product. That, combined with its flexible column views, has let me create a highly customized work environment that really makes life easier. The one thing I don't like about Ecco is that not everybody feels the same way about it as I do. (Comments from co-workers range from "inflexible" to "slow.") Thus, its workgroup features go to waste, since there's nobody to share with. At least for group scheduling I can use Ecco's hooks into Schedule+.

Ecco Professional is a little slow and it's a resource hog, but I've lived through four upgrades of the product, and every revision has been leaner than the one before. I'm a convert: Ecco Professional is part of my life. RAPHAEL NEEDLEMAN

Ecco Professional 2.0 / Arabesque Software / (800) 457-4243 / $279
Circle No. 642 on Reader Service Card

PHOTOGRAPH BY ARNOLD TIOSE JD

BEFORE YOU BUY A
COMPUTER,
WE'D LIKE TO SELL YOU A
COMPANY.

IN ORDER TO BUILD AFFORDABLE, WE ASSEMBLED

When you buy a computer, you're buying more than just the computer itself. You're also buying the company.

As you look beyond speeds and feeds—and of course, price, price, price—what are you getting? Are the systems reliable? Does the company stand behind their products? Will they even be in business a few years from now?

These are the same considerations that guided us when we created AMBRA,™ the direct-order personal computer company.

OUR COMPANY—A CAREFUL ASSEMBLY OF ROCK-SOLID COMPONENTS.

In a sense, putting our company together was not unlike building a computer. As a nimble, entrepreneurial company, we're able to look at processes rather than departments. Every aspect of our product design, manufacturing, vendor selection, quality control, product testing and customer service is carefully constructed to work as an efficient, interdependent part of a larger, integrated system.

What's more, we continually look for ways to improve all of these processes—all to bring you consistent, reliable computing, from the moment you take an AMBRA system out of the box.

AN OPTIMIZED DESIGN IS JUST THE BEGINNING.

The development of every AMBRA system starts with a simple question: What can we do to bring better computing to today's power-hungry PC users?

Our in-house engineering staff and product development experts constantly assess the evolving needs of both people and businesses. Based on these needs, we then develop system designs that fully exploit and optimize the power of the latest technologies.

THE COMPONENTS OF CHOOSING A SUPPLIER.

We scrupulously examine our potential vendors—for quality, technology and value. We inspect their manufacturing sites. We use reputable suppliers—such as Intel,® IBM® and Western Digital. We test the components in-house—for ruggedness, compatibility and our own demanding benchmarks.

Once we've established a successful partnership with a supplier, we continue to use them as the single source for that particular component. In the long run, this helps us ensure consistency, quality and compatibility.

YOU CAN'T MANUFACTURE THIS LEVEL OF QUALITY.

Next, we send our qualified components to our integrator and manufacturer. Since 1982, they've manufactured over 24 million PCs for demanding clients known for their insistence on delivering quality.

This facility is ISO 9000 certified, which

ASSEMBI

90MHz, REAL POWER, REAL-TIME VIDEO.

"With the AMBRA DP90PCI, AMBRA...has developed a machine that offers excellent performance at a reasonable price." — *PC Magazine, June 28, 1994*

With its superscalar architecture and an enhanced floating-point unit, the Pentium processor sets the performance standard (up to 150 MIPS). The Intel Pentium 90MHz processor combined with PCI local bus architecture, makes the AMBRA 90MHz mini-tower ideal for resource-intensive applications—such as multimedia, 3D graphics and statistical modeling. What's more, it protects your investment—it's upgradable, expandable and runs over 50,000 X86 applications. All this, along with the greatest number of PCI options and features, enables you to create the most powerful PC ever.

intel inside pentium™ PROCESSOR

90MHz INTEL PROCESSOR *delivers industry-leading processing speeds up to 147% faster than a 486DX2/66MHz.*

256KB L2 WRITE-BACK CACHE *boosts performance above the integrated 16KB internal on-chip cache.*

VIDEO OPTIONS UP TO 32 MILLION WINMARKS. *PCI video options provide up to 32.1 Winmarks (4.0).*

PCI-SCSI-2 OPTION (EXPANDABLE TO 8GB) *allows you to store an enormous amount of data and advanced applications.*

SPECIALIST TSENG LABS

90MHz PENTIUM STANDARD FEATURES

- ▲ Intel 90MHz Pentium CPU
- ▲ 64-bit CPU-Memory-Cache Data Path
- ▲ 256KB L2 & 16KB L1 Cache
- ▲ Fast 32-bit PCI/IDE Controller
- ▲ 4 ISA, 2 PCI & 1 ISA/PCI Slots
- ▲ 3.5" 1.44MB Diskette Drive
- ▲ 6 Drive Bays
- ▲ Lexmark™ 101-Key Keyboard
- ▲ MS-DOS® 6.2, Windows™ 3.1, Mouse
- ▲ One-Year IBM Onsite Service

1 DP90PCI *NOW* $2899

Business Lease: $103/Month

- ▲ Intel 90MHz Pentium CPU
- ▲ 8MB RAM, Max: 128MB
- ▲ 720MB Enhanced IDE Caviar™ Hard Disk Drive
- ▲ 15" FST-NI Color Monitor-LR (13.6" viewable screen size)
- ▲ Double-Speed Multisession CD-ROM
- ▲ PCI Graphics Accelerator 2MB DRAM

2 MediaPro™ 90 *NOW* $3599

Business Lease: $128/Month

- ▲ Intel 90MHz Pentium CPU
- ▲ 16MB RAM, Max: 128MB
- ▲ 720MB Enhanced IDE Caviar Hard Disk Drive
- ▲ 15" FST-NI Color Monitor-LR (13.6" viewable screen size)
- ▲ Double-Speed Multisession CD-ROM Drive
- ▲ 16-bit Sound Card & 2 Speakers
- ▲ **TrueVideo™ Capture Board** with Tseng Video Image Processor

3 MediaPro 90T *NOW* $3999

Business Lease: $142/Month

- ▲ Mini-Tower Chassis
- ▲ Intel 90MHz Pentium CPU
- ▲ 16MB RAM, Max: 128MB
- ▲ 1.4GB (2x720MB Enhanced IDE Caviar Hard Disk Drives)
- ▲ 15" FST-NI Color Monitor-LR (13.6" viewable screen size)
- ▲ Double-Speed Multisession CD-ROM Drive
- ▲ 16-bit Sound Card & 2 Speakers
- ▲ **TrueVideo Capture Board** with Tseng Video Image Processor

TRUEVIDEO

- ▲ Connects to Standard Camcorders & VCR
- ▲ Video Capture of Still & Motion Video
- ▲ Comes with Video for Windows,™ & Intel Indeo™ Compression

Versatile Performer

- ▲ High-Performance Graphics & Video
- ▲ Capture & Import Directly into Windows Applications
- ▲ Perfect "Color Scanner" for Presentations, Image Databases

Fast, Powerful Image Processing

- ▲ Ultra-Smooth, Jitter-&-Stagger-Free Live Video
- ▲ Video Acceleration of Clips from CD-ROM & Hard Disk
- ▲ 31 Million Winmarks 4.0 at 1024x768, 256 Colors, at 70Hz

Lifelike Display

- ▲ NI Display of Up to 800x600 (16 Million Colors) or 1280x1024 (256 Colors)
- ▲ Stretch Images Up to 1200 Times with No Loss of Image Quality
- ▲ Selectable Refresh Rates of 30 Frames/Sec, 60 Fields/Sec, or 30 Fields/Sec

LED HERE ARE OUR

PENTIUM POWER STARTS AT $1899.

"The AMBRA Pentium PCI Desktop makes it clear that this is the new Windows/Multimedia system standard."
—Windows Sources, April 1994

With this much power at your fingertips, you'd think you were sitting at a workstation. Because now the affordable AMBRA Pentium desktop has arrived. It brings you the latest in personal computer technology; a Pentium 60MHz microprocessor with PCI local bus. Standard features included are 256KB L2 and 16KB L1 caches, a 64-bit CPU-memory-cache data path, a high-performance floating-point unit, a fast 32-bit PCI/IDE controller, and a system RAM that is expandable to 128MB and compatible with over 50,000 X86 applications. This combination of performance and compatibility positions the AMBRA Pentium 60MHz systems to meet the needs of the emerging wave of new 32-bit applications and next generation operating systems.

intel inside pentium™ PROCESSOR

The AMBRA DP60PCI System, InfoWorld, March 14, 1994

60MHz INTEL PROCESSOR *delivers 100 MIPS with its superscalar, dual-pipelined, enhanced floating-point architecture, increasing your overall productivity.*

PCI LOCAL BUS GRAPHICS ACCELERATOR *options provide a 32-bit or 64-bit graphics engine—ideal for demanding GUI-based applications.*

PCI/IDE DISK CONTROLLER *increases performance by using 32-bit disk access reaching transfer rates up to 11MB/sec (vs. 2MB for standard IDE transfers).*

Accordingly the finest™ Caviar
WESTERN DIGITAL

60MHz PENTIUM PCI STANDARD FEATURES

- ▲ Intel 60MHz Pentium CPU
- ▲ 64-bit CPU-Memory-Cache Data Path
- ▲ 256KB L2 & 16KB L1 Cache
- ▲ Fast 32-bit PCI/IDE Controller
- ▲ 4 ISA, 2 PCI & 1 ISA/PCI Slots
- ▲ 3.5" 1.44MB Diskette Drive
- ▲ 6 Drive Bays
- ▲ Fast Serial Ports—16550 UART
- ▲ Enhanced Parallel Port—ECP/EPP
- ▲ Lexmark 101-Key Keyboard
- ▲ MS-DOS 6.2, Windows 3.1, Mouse
- ▲ One-Year IBM Onsite Service

4 DP60PCI
NOW $1899
Business Lease: $68/Month

- ▲ Intel 60MHz Pentium CPU
- ▲ 8MB RAM, Max: 128MB
- ▲ 420MB Enhanced IDE Caviar Hard Disk Drive
- ▲ 15" FST-NI Color Monitor-LR (13.6" viewable screen size)
- ▲ PCI Graphics Accelerator 1MB DRAM

5 DP60PCI
NOW $2199
Business Lease: $78/Month

- ▲ Intel 60MHz Pentium CPU
- ▲ 8MB RAM, Max: 128MB
- ▲ 540MB Enhanced IDE Caviar Hard Disk Drive
- ▲ 15" FST-NI Color Monitor-LR (13.6" viewable screen size)
- ▲ PCI Graphics Accelerator 2MB DRAM
- ▲ Double-Speed Multisession CD-ROM Drive

6 DP60PCI
NOW $2299
Business Lease: $82/Month

- ▲ Intel 60MHz Pentium CPU
- ▲ 8MB RAM, Max: 128MB
- ▲ 720MB Enhanced IDE Caviar Hard Disk Drive
- ▲ 15" FST-NI Color Monitor-LR (13.6" viewable screen size)
- ▲ Diamond Viper PCI Graphics Accelerator 2MB VRAM

LIMITED QUANTITIES

Order any system with a CD-ROM drive and upgrade to multimedia with a 16-bit sound card and 2 stereo speakers for $49 (offer expires 9-30-94).[1]

HIGH-PERFORMANCE COMPUTERS, THE COMPANY FIRST.

means stringent adherence to an established procedure of quality checks, documentation and reporting. Checks along the manufacturing line include assembly verification, initialization wake-up testing, and automatic functional testing for every system.

CHECKS AND RECHECKS.

Our in-house engineering staff performs full component-level and manufactured system evaluations and release tests. Even the packaging is tested.

What's more, every new AMBRA system receives XXCAL Gold Certification, as well as FCC, UL and CUL certification.

We continue to monitor and evaluate every aspect of the entire design and manufacturing process, to deliver more powerful, more reliable personal computing.

As testimony to our success, our products have received numerous glowing reviews and "Best Buy" endorsements. Among them, *InfoWorld, PC World, Windows Sources, PC Week* and *PC Magazine*.

WE'RE RIGHT THERE—WITH ROCK-SOLID SERVICE AND SUPPORT.

After we sell you a computer, we stand behind every purchase. In fact, we've enlisted the best support in the industry. Every system we sell is backed by toll-free IBM technical service, 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. And for desktops and mini-towers, IBM onsite technical service is included. Finally, if you're not completely satisfied, return your purchase within 30 days, and we'll give you your money back. Period.

At AMBRA, we're committed to you, our customer. We'll always be there when you need us—now and in the future.

PENTIUM POWER STARTS AT JUST $1899, THE FASTEST 486DX2 EVER IS ONLY $1599, AND OUR 75MHZ DX4 NOTEBOOK IS ONLY $2899.

We do more than just promise high-powered, low-priced computing. We're ready to deliver—today.

In the pages that follow, compare our reliable, leading-edge technology. Pentium™ desktops and mini-towers, optimized I/VLs and powerhouse notebooks, among others.

Compare our prices—the lowest ever. And when it comes to our reliable service and support, there is no comparison.

Compare, and you'll be sold on our computers—and our company.

AMBRA

ER.

THE ULTIMATE NOTEBOOK.

"...their ergonomic design and attractive features go a ways toward differentiating them from the throng of notebook PCs available." —*PC Week, May 9, 1994*

Powered by a fast Intel DX4/75MHz processor, the N75D sets a new standard for notebooks. The 10.3-inch dual-scan color display screen is sharp and vivid. With integrated audio playback/record, your multimedia presentations will be very powerful. And with an ergonomically designed wrist-rest and a long-lasting NiMH battery, you'll work comfortably for hours. It'll fit comfortably within your budget, too.

N75D-340
PC World,
August 1994 Issue

The AMBRA
N75D-340,
InfoWorld,
May 23, 1994

A 9.5" TFT ACTIVE MATRIX COLOR OR A 10.3" DUAL-SCAN DSTN COLOR DISPLAY *lets you view sharp, vivid graphics.*

SYSTEM STATUS PANEL *lets you monitor battery life, disk drive activity, suspend/resume and more.*

ERGONOMIC KEYBOARD WITH AN INTEGRATED 16MM TRACKBALL *makes data entry quick and comfortable.*

340MB UPGRADABLE HARD DISK *enables you to store tons of data and virtually all kinds of advanced applications.*

INTEGRATED ADVANCED AUDIO *playback and edit functions give your multimedia presentations impact. Or use the record capability through the inline jack.*

STANDARD NOTEBOOK FEATURES

- ▲ Integrated Audio (Speaker and Microphone)
- ▲ Centered 16mm Trackball
- ▲ System Status Panel
- ▲ 4MB RAM, Max: 20MB
- ▲ 3.5" 1.44MB Diskette Drive
- ▲ Type III PCMCIA Slot (1 Type III/ 2 Type II)
- ▲ 85-Key Keyboard
- ▲ MS-DOS 6.2
- ▲ Windows for Workgroups® 3.11
- ▲ 6.7 Pounds, Including NiMH Battery
- ▲ Includes AC Adapter and Case

10 N75D-340

NOW $2599

Business Lease: $92/Month

- ▲ 75MHz Intel DX4
- ▲ 340MB Hard Disk Drive, Upgradable
- ▲ 10.3" Dual-Scan DSTN Color Display with Local Bus Video and 1MB Video RAM

11 N75T-340

NOW $3499

Business Lease: $124/Month

- ▲ 75MHz Intel DX4
- ▲ 340MB Hard Disk Drive, Upgradable
- ▲ 9.5" Active Matrix TFT Color Display with Local Bus Video and 1MB Video RAM

12 N100T-450

NOW $3699

Business Lease: $131/Month

- ▲ 100MHz Intel DX4
- ▲ 450MB Hard Disk Drive, Upgradable
- ▲ 9.5" Active Matrix TFT Color Display with Local Bus Video and 1MB Video RAM

N100 AND N75 OPTIONS

▲ 4MB Memory	$249
▲ 8MB Memory	$449
▲ 16MB Memory	$1149
▲ NiMH Battery	$139
▲ Battery Charger	$99
▲ 2.4/9.6 kbps Data/Fax Modem	$169
▲ 14.4 kbps Data/Fax Modem	$259
▲ 12Volt DC Auto Adapter	$79
▲ AC Adapter	$89
▲ Docking Station	$399
▲ Deluxe Carrying Case	$99
▲ New ClidePoint®	$89
▲ N100T/N75T Extended Warranty	$349
▲ N75D Extended Warranty	$299

intel inside

CALL NOW 1800-200-3195

AMBRA

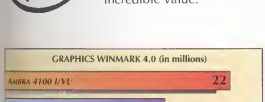
LOWEST PRICES EV

THE FASTEST 486 EVER IS NOW EVEN FASTER.

"...the D466 I/VL (is) the fastest 486DX2/66 we've ever tested."
—InfoWorld, April 4, 1994

See for yourself. This is one powerful PC. In fact, video performance is now 20% faster with new Tseng W32p video drivers. Add higher performance through VESA® IDE, VESA graphics and enhanced parallel ports. Add investment protection with an upgrade path to Pentium technology and PCI. For expandability, there are 5 expansion slots and 5 drive bays in the desktop model; 8 expansion slots and 6 drive bays in the mini-tower, graphics upgradable to 2MB, providing True Color at 800x600 resolution. At this price, it all adds up to an incredible value.

intel inside



UPGRADABLE TO PCI. *Switch to PCI expansion slots by upgrading the riser card and flashing the BIOS.*

TRUE COLOR. *Increased color depth to meet or exceed today's demanding multimedia applications—supports 800x600 True Color.*

FAST SERIAL PORTS. *Two 16-bit high-speed serial ports use a fast 16550 UART. The FIFO buffer allows continued serial communication while the CPU is processing other data.*

ENHANCED PARALLEL PORT (ECP/EPP) *increases print performance from 200KB/sec to 2MB/sec—in simple terms, 133 times faster.*

I/VL DESKTOP STANDARD FEATURES

- ▲ Upgradable to PCI & Pentium Technology
- ▲ 256KB Write-Back L2 Cache
- ▲ Tseng W32p VESA Graphics Accelerator—1MB, Upgradable to 2MB
- ▲ VESA Local Bus IDE Hard Drive Controller
- ▲ 4 16-bit ISA & 1 32-bit VL Bus Slots
- ▲ 3.5" 1.44MB Diskette Drive
- ▲ 5 Drive Bays
- ▲ Lexmark 101-Key Keyboard
- ▲ MS-DOS 6.2, Windows 3.1, Mouse
- ▲ Upgrade to Mini-Tower $75
- ▲ One-Year IBM Onsite Service

7 D466 I/VL
NOW $1599

Business Lease: $57/Month

- ▲ 486DX2/66MHz Processor
- ▲ 4MB RAM, Max: 64MB
- ▲ 212MB Enhanced IDE Caviar Hard Disk Drive
- ▲ 15" FST-NI Color Monitor-LR (13.6" viewable screen size)

The AMBRA D466 I/VL InfoWorld, April 4, 1994

8 BEST BUY D466 I/VL
NOW $2299

Business Lease: $82/Month

- ▲ 486DX2/66MHz Processor
- ▲ 8MB RAM, Max: 64MB
- ▲ 540MB Enhanced IDE Caviar Hard Disk Drive
- ▲ 15" FST-NI Color Monitor-LR (13.6" viewable screen size)
- ▲ 16-bit Sound Card & 2 Speakers
- ▲ Borland Office™ on CD:[4] (WordPerfect,® Quattro® Pro & Paradox®)
- ▲ Productivity Pack on CD:[5] PhoneDisc USA Business Macromedia Action! SE Macromedia Authorware SE Clipmedia2 Business & Industry

9 BEST BUY D4100 I/VL
NOW $2299

Business Lease: $82/Month

- ▲ 100MHz Intel DX4 Processor
- ▲ 16KB L1 Cache
- ▲ 8MB RAM, Max: 64MB
- ▲ 720MB Enhanced IDE Caviar Hard Disk Drive
- ▲ 15" FST-NI Color Monitor-LR (13.6" viewable screen size)

TSENG LABS

WE COULD GO ON AND ON.

All AMBRA Desktops and Mini-Towers Feature:

- ▲ *Upgrade Path to Pentium Technology*
- ▲ *3.5" 1.44MB Diskette Drive*
- ▲ *Lexmark 101-Key Keyboard*
- ▲ *MS-DOS 6.2*
- ▲ *Windows 3.1*
- ▲ *Mouse*
- ▲ *One-Year IBM Onsite Service*

486 DESKTOP SYSTEMS

13 486SX/33MHz
NOW $1299

Model D4335XA
Business Lease: $46/Month
- ▲ 128KB L2 Cache, Max: 256KB
- ▲ 4MB RAM, Max: 36MB
- ▲ 212MB Enhanced IDE Caviar Hard Disk Drive
- ▲ 15" FST-NI Color Monitor-LR (13.6" viewable screen size)
- ▲ VESA Local Bus Graphics Accelerator 1MB
- ▲ VESA Local Bus IDE Hard Drive Controller
- ▲ S ISA Slots & S Drive Bays

14 486DX2/50MHz
NOW $1369

Model S450DX
Business Lease: $49/Month
- ▲ 128KB L2 Cache, Max: 256KB
- ▲ 4MB RAM, Max: 36MB
- ▲ 212MB Enhanced IDE Caviar Hard Disk Drive
- ▲ 15" FST-NI Color Monitor-LR (13.6" viewable screen size)
- ▲ VESA Local Bus Graphics Accelerator 1MB
- ▲ 2 VESA & 1 ISA Slots
- ▲ 3 Drive Bays

15 486DX2/66MHz
NOW $1599

Model D466DXA
Business Lease: $57/Month
- ▲ 128KB L2 Cache, Max: 256KB
- ▲ 8MB RAM, Max: 36MB
- ▲ 212MB Enhanced IDE Caviar Hard Disk Drive
- ▲ 15" FST-NI Color Monitor-LR (13.6" viewable screen size)
- ▲ VESA Local Bus Graphics Accelerator 1MB
- ▲ VESA Local Bus IDE Hard Drive Controller
- ▲ S ISA Slots & S Drive Bays

UPGRADABLE BUS MODEL

16 486DX2/66MHz
NOW $1799

Model D466 I/VL
Business Lease: $64/Month
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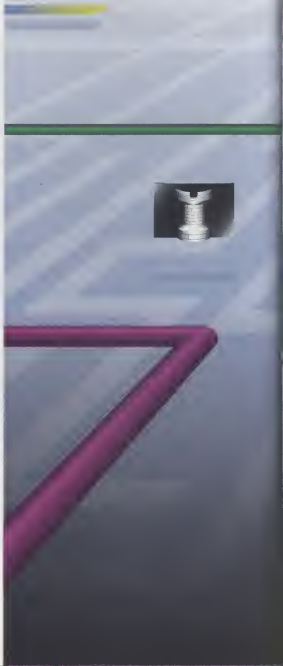
Going

A PRACTICAL USER'S GUIDE

The I-Way is up and running—open for business. It's a secret weapon to help you run your business smarter, be more timely, cut costs, and outdo the competition. The I-Way's power stems from its diversity. But that diversity also makes it daunting at first. Never fear: Coming up are a helpful trio of stories. In "The Net Result" on page 122, you'll learn how to **ACCESS** the Internet, the central artery of the I-Way. "Online Fever" is a **FACE-OFF** comparing commercial online services, starting on page 140. And on page 166, "Dialing for Data" highlights some of the best I-Way **PIT STOPS:** bulletin boards. So let's drive past the hype and onto the real infobahn. Start your engines.



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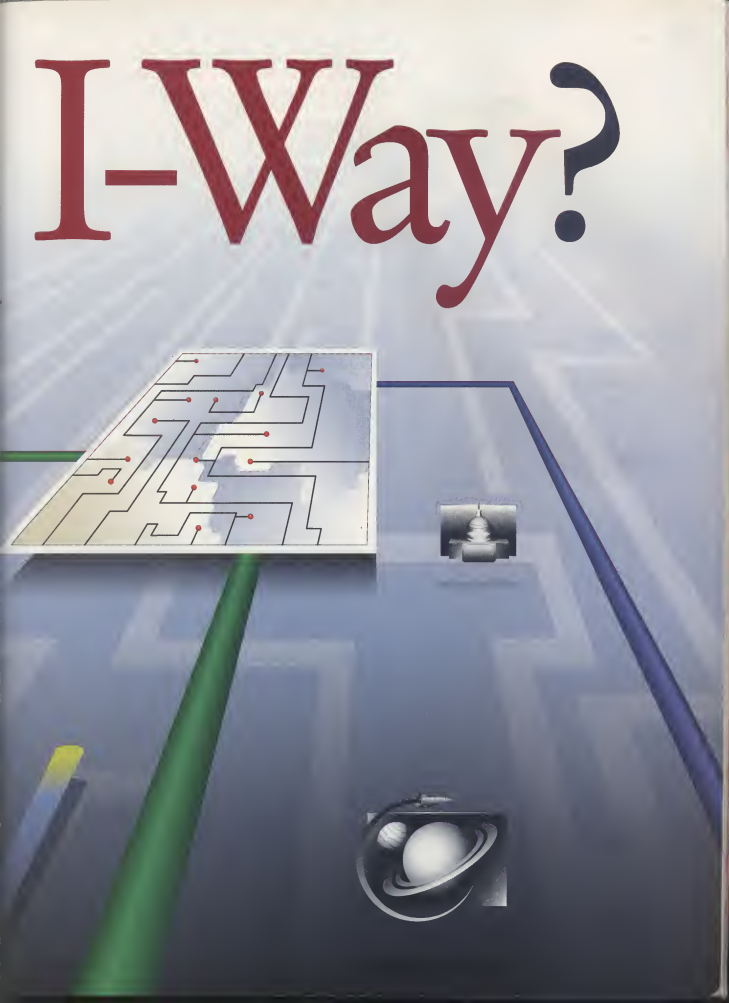


The Net Result

Annual reports from every public company in the country. E-mail addresses for every economist in the free world. Real-time exchange rates. The White House's own searchable archive of every speech Bill Clinton has ever given. Every business title in U.C. Berkeley's library. All this and more is out there right now on the I-Way's fast lane. If you don't get to it first, your competitors will.

With its mother lode of business information poised to give you a competitive advantage, you need to get on the Internet. Well, roll up your sleeves and grab a wrench. It's not easy to connect to the Net, and it's no cinch to get around once you're there, either. Anyone who spends serious time on the Net soon learns that it's a constant challenge—rich and disorganized, sometimes valuable and occasionally hilarious, absolutely unmanaged and unmanageable.

Traditionally, establishing an Internet connection has demanded total immersion in the icy depths of network hardware and software. Protocols and parity settings. IP addresses and domain names. Speeds and feeds. This is far more arcane than anything the average PC-savvy businessperson is likely to have mastered.

It's starting to get easier. But the closest thing to an effortless, completely interactive Internet access package still has a few catches.

To hear some people talk, instant Internet is just around the corner. Your PC will dial a number, negotiate a communications protocol with a remote host, and get its own address. You'll get a log-in name, answer a few simple questions, and voilà, you're on the Net.

Frankly, we'll settle for a full-strength networking package that's relatively easy to install. There are definitely enough options. It seems like every company that sells a Unix connectivity package is working on a scaled-down version for the dial-up Internet access market. Keeping track of each month's new arrivals is like counting snowflakes in a blizzard.

Turn to page 128 for our review of all-in-one Internet access

BY ED BOTT AND TOM LIPKIS

SYNOPSIS

TERMS OF ATTACHMENT: *Your guide to decipbering Netspeak gibberish.* **124**

SURFING SAFARI: *Our favorite Internet destination guides.* **125**

HOW IT WORKS: *Your PC connection.* **126**

NOTHING BUT NET: *Dial-up packages for daily use.* **128**

EASY TCP/IP: *Work faster, save memory.* **128**

NET COSTS: *The Net isn't just another costly online service.* **130**

TOLL ROADS TO THE NET: *Commercial services' Net access.* **132**

FINAL ANALYSIS: *Picks for today and the near future.* **135**

A GOPHER: With navigation-friendly menus, Gopher sites sprang from academia.

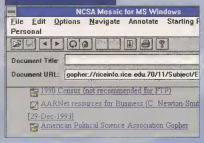
B FTP: Sending and receiving files? FTP sites are a popular exchange for data and programs.

C TELNET: For direct control over eclectic remote resources, Telnet lets you command systems on the Net.

D WORLD WIDE WEB: Hypertext connects related information at global sites with a simple click on a word.

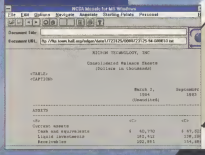
E WAIS: Indexed databases allow speedy searches of government, industry, and other types of data.

A chico.rice.edu



Rice Economics Gopher: Like most academic locations, Rice University organizes data by subject.

B ftp town.hall.org

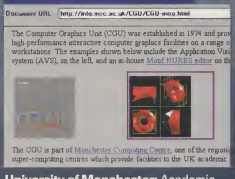


EDGAR: As at other FTP sites, this repository contains government SEC filings for public corporations.

C telnet a2i.rahul.net

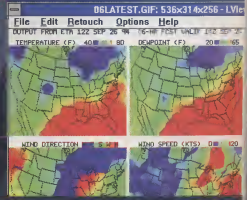
a2i Communications: Once attached to a corporate site via Telnet, you can list files like daily stock quotes.

D http://info.mcc.ac.uk/CGU



University of Manchester: Academic WWW locations build hypertext links to topics such as computer graphics.

E WAIS weather.src



Weather Underground: WAIS simplifies searches for information like a GIF file of the day's weather.

packages. But before we get to the dirty details, let's start with a few fundamental truths.

The Internet rewards serious play. An hour (or six) of determined wandering is worth a hundred magazine articles. The more you explore the Net, the more you're likely to find and the faster you can get around.

The Internet demands good citizenship. There's no single rule book for the Net. But there is a widely accepted code of behavior—*netiquette*—that's built on common sense and easy to discover if you look for it.

Internet access should not be expensive. The actual monthly cost per user for the Internet backbone—the basic communication infrastructure—is about 50 cents. Even after accounting for the provider's phone charges, equipment costs, and overhead, an hour of Internet access per day should not cost you more than a typical cable bill—less than $30 per month.

The Journey Is Not the Reward You want to spend as little time as possible on the highway and as much time as possible at your destination. You want the transportation system to run as smoothly as a Swiss railroad. Above all, you want to find useful stuff.

To help you understand what's out there, here are some places to start looking:

• **Usenet News** You don't have to be a rocket scientist to participate in Usenet news, the Net's collection of discussion groups. But if you are, you'll gravitate to sci.astro.hubble. Shallower inquiring minds will prefer alt.national.enquirer. Newsgroups tend to be more chaotic and less decorous than CompuServe forums.

• **Anonymous FTP and Archie** All sorts of software gems, freeware and shareware, are available using anonymous FTP. A way to send and receive files to servers on the Net, FTP is both a noun and a verb in Netspeak. It's anonymous because anonymous is the user name you type at the log-in prompt of an FTP server. Netiquette suggests you use your e-mail address for the password so you don't remain anonymous. Archie, a utility that searches an index of filenames across anonymous FTP sites, relieves some of the burden of searching FTP servers for a file. If you've ever navigated a DOS directory looking for a file, you'll love the extra information an Archie search provides.

• **Gopher and Veronica** Tunneling through Gopherspace takes you to a menu-based server set up for a specific purpose. For example, the Gopher server at the Electronic Frontier Foundation (gopher.eff.org) contains a collection of data about electronic personal privacy. Every Gopher server has pointers to other Gopher servers. Gopher servers have a search capability similar to FTP's Archie called Veronica, which scans through titles on every Gopher server it knows of to find requested information.

• **Wide Area Information Servers** Instant answers—that's the promise of WAIS, originally developed by Thinking Machines. Unlike Gopher collections, which are indexed only by menu title, every document in a WAIS database is fully indexed. If a graphic description or a text document contains the word amnesia, you can find it in a WAIS search.

Although the government and private sector have begun to index databases for the WAIS system, it has achieved only a fraction of its potential, probably because maintaining a WAIS database is a supreme

KEY WORDS NOT ENOUGH TECHNOBABBLE? THE **INTERNET** ADDS ITS OWN JARGON

Terms of Attachment

Domain Name System: A distributed database that translates computer names (like pcc.ziff.com) into numeric IP addresses, and vice versa.

FAQ: A list of frequently asked questions helps newcomers to a Usenet newsgroup get answers to common questions, reducing repetitive postings.

FTP: File transfer protocol is a utility (and corresponding protocol) to move a file across the Net from one system to another.

HTML: The Hypertext Markup Language is used to tie different data types into a World Wide Web document.

IP Address: In the Domain Name System, the 32-bit number that identifies a location on the Internet. It is usually broken into four groups, such as 123.123.1.123.

MIME: The Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions is a standard for encoding multiple data types—text, movies, sound, etc.—in a mail message.

Packet: This is the basic unit of information on the Internet. Each transmission is broken into packets, which travel independently around the network.

PPP: Point-to-Point Protocol is one of two popular protocols for exchanging Internet packets over a dial-up phone line. More flexible and robust than SLIP.

RTFM: Loosely, "Read the *furshlugginer* manual."

SLIP: Serial Line Internet Protocol is the other popular protocol for connecting a computer to the Internet over a dial-up phone line.

TCP/IP: Transmission Control Protocol/Internet Protocol are two basic building blocks of the Internet. TCP is a connection-oriented protocol; IP is a lower-level packet-handling protocol. Together they make sure data gets from one point to another on the Net.

Telnet: This is both a protocol and the generic name for a utility that allows a person to log in to a remote computer.

technical challenge. One prosaic but universally useful WAIS database is zipcodes.src, a database of zip codes in the United States. (Use Telnet to connect to quake.think.com and use its WAIS client for the search.)

• **World Wide Web** Encompassing many tools and utilities found elsewhere on the Net, the Web is a distributed hypermedia system. By following the links in a document, you can hopscotch to related information—not just in that file but anywhere on the Web, even if it's halfway around the world. Web documents often include graphics; some contain embedded links to other media types as well—such as PostScript or GIF graphics, sound samples, MPEG or QuickTime movies. To handle these, you'll need a graphical browser, like the National Center for Supercomputing Applications' Mosaic, plus applets to play back sound and video or display graphics. You'll also need patience. Downloading multimedia over a dial-up connection takes time.

• **Internet Mail** Finally, you can communicate via Internet mail with just about anyone, thanks to Net gateways to virtually every public e-mail system.

Given the richness of the Net, it's no wonder there's a stampede to get access. But with dozens of ways to connect to the Internet, the question is: How?

You Can Get There from Here If your corporate network has a direct connection to the Net, and you're on good terms with the net administrator, you're set. If not, skip some setup headaches by using an online service's access (see "Toll Roads to the Net," page 132).

But for the most flexible graphical access to the Internet outside the office, your best bet is a full Serial Line Internet Protocol/Point to Point Protocol (SLIP/PPP) connection (see "SLIP/PPP: Direct IP Benefits without Unix Hassles," page 126). To get there, you'll go through the following four-step process:

• **Step 1** Establish an account with an access provider. You'll be given a phone number(s), log-in name, password, and the technical information you'll need to configure the access software, such as an IP address, domain name, and assorted technotrivia. (For pointers to local access providers, see "Surfing Safari," at right.)

• **Step 2** Back up everything so you can get back to ground zero. You're about to rearrange DOS, Windows, and maybe even some hardware. At a bare minimum, back up AUTOEXEC.BAT, CONFIG.SYS, and your Windows and System directories.

• **Step 3** Add network and communication drivers to your PC. This usually means installing a TCP/IP stack and configuring it to dial in to your access service.

• **Step 4** Configure the Internet utilities. You'll need to provide the names of preferred mail and news servers to your mail and news clients.

Repeat steps 1 through 4 as necessary until everything works. Our advice: Set aside half a day for setup and troubleshooting.

TOM LIPKIS *has been using the Net for research and business since 1972.*

BOOKSHELF INTERNET **YELLOW PAGES**

Surfing Safari

One reason corporate Charlie doesn't surf the Internet is the sheer volume of information. Short of spending some time on a friend's connection, a book is the best way to learn about the Internet and its resources.

Go to an average Barnes & Noble bookstore today and there's a separate wing dedicated to the Internet. A comprehensive list of current titles is available in the Usenet newsgroup alt.internet.services and via anonymous FTP at rtfm.mit.edu:/pub/usenet/news.answers/internet-services/internet-booklist.

To sift out the chaff, we asked our staff for their favorite titles. These books will teach you how to wax your data surfboard and cut back against the rising wave of Internet data.

Zen and the Art of the Internet: A Beginner's Guide
by Brendan P. Kehoe (Prentice Hall)
As a newcomer to the Net, I looked for a low-cal book to guide me through the maze as painlessly as possible. Kehoe's style is light, engaging, and just right for Net freshmen. When I grow up, I'll check out *The Whole Internet.*—*Yael Li-Ron, Help Editor*

The Internet Resource
by Quick Reference Corp. (Que Publishing)
I don't need a monstrous Internet tome sitting next to my computer. I need a pocket-sized, Michelin-style guide. *The Internet Resource* fits the bill. Its alphabetic listing of Usenet newsgroups provides quick one-sentence descriptions that keep you from wasting time.—*Matthew J. Lake, Senior Editor*

The Whole Internet
by Ed Krol (O'Reilly & Associates)
I'm surprised there aren't Bible study groups around this book. *Everybody* seems to treat it as a definitive work. No wonder. It has everything from explanations of networking concepts to descriptions of connectivity options to a listing of key Internet destinations and service providers.—*Chris Sandlund, Associate Editor*

The Internet Directory
by Eric Braun (Fawcett Columbine)
As an editor, I demand *accuracy.* That's why I appreciate Eric Braun's efforts to verify each Internet address—from newsgroups to FTP sites to Gopher databases. Not to mention his exhaustive index. Braun's detailed descriptions of Net sites give me the information I need to decide where to troll for data.—*Richard Schwerin, Associate Editor*

Untangling the Net

What does it take to make a powerful, usable, completely interactive Internet connection, minus the usual hassle? What does a remote office or individual user really need to dial up the Net?

For starters, you need the network plumbing: a TCP/IP stack that hooks into Windows, plus software to connect your PC with a remote host. You also need usable utilities to tap Internet resources without issuing complex commands. And if the software developers are doing their jobs, you should get a fill-in-the-blanks installation routine and concise documentation.

We selected four shrink-wrapped products that fit our criteria. Each includes everything you need to make a dial-up connection, usually via Serial Line Internet Protocol (SLIP) or Point-to-Point Protocol (PPP). (See below for more details.) At a minimum, each package includes simple FTP and Telnet utilities, a news reader, and a mail client. Prices vary, but we still prefer to pay less than $200.

We also looked at The Pipeline, a unique Net access package that tries to organize the Internet and provide low-cost access without requiring TCP/IP.

Finally, we harvested an assortment of free (or nearly free) Internet access utilities directly from the Net to see whether they can compete with their commercial cousins in terms of power and usability.

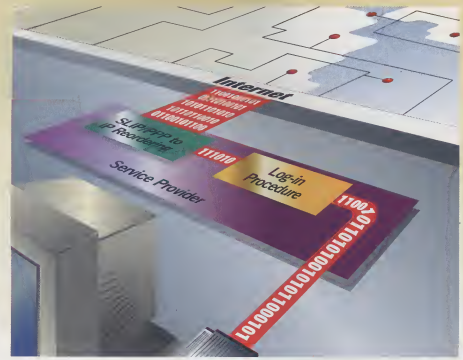
Our conclusions? It takes a thorough reading of the documentation to get most of these packages running. Installing and configuring the software was often needlessly complicated, but not impossible.

Many of the packages we examined were raw and rough-edged. Don't let the shrink-wrap fool you. With the exception of The Pipeline, a healthy dose of usability testing would do wonders for most of the interfaces.

HOW IT WORKS

SLIP/PPP: DIRECT IP BENEFITS WITHOUT UNIX HASSLES

Previously, connecting PCs to the Net meant adding a Unix gateway and a leased 56Kbps phone line to your LAN. Your company balks at the cost? Volunteer to become a Net guinea pig with a Serial Line Internet Protocol (SLIP) or Point-to-Point Protocol (PPP) dial-up connection. It costs less and shields you from Unix.



Preparing Packets: Your PC organizes your data into packets in the IP format, dials up the service provider via a high-speed modem, and sends the packets serially.

Service Provider: A Unix software routine recognizes the incoming signal and initiates the log-in process. Once the name and password are approved, the service provider's host changes over to SLIP or PPP mode and reorders serial packets into network-ready IP packets. The host then forwards the packets through its network connection to the Internet.

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To help you find the information you want, you'll have access to powerful search utilities such as "Gopher," "Hytelnet" and "WAIS." If you aren't familiar with these terms, don't worry; DELPHI has hundreds of expert online assistants and a large collection of help files, books, programs, and other resources to help get you started.

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Nothing but **Net**

You have an account with an Internet access provider. Now you need software. Take a deep breath. Relax. Adding TCP/IP to your PC won't be *that* bad.

A quick note: We tested each of these products using Windows for Workgroups 3.11, but they'll work equally well under Windows 3.1.

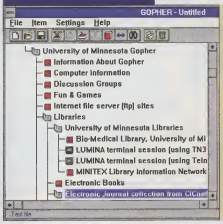
NetManage's Internet Chameleon According to the box, installing this scaled-down version of the $499 Chameleon 4.0 package should take 5 minutes. We took about an hour. After clicking through the last dialog box, we were smoothly running the NetManage Enhanced Windows TCP/IP (NEWT) stack and Chameleon's eight Internet utilities.

If you get Internet access from a major provider, scripts to automate the configuration process are prebuilt. On the other hand, setting up a PPP connection for a new provider can be overly complicated.

NEWTnews, Chameleon's News Reader, forces you to work with a single list of articles. Sorting by subject line helps organize articles but is a poor substitute for a true, threaded news reader.

Thanks to support for Multipurpose Internet Mail Extensions (MIME), the mail client can send and receive multimedia attachments. It can filter incoming mail using rules and user-defined folders and handle binary attachments. You can also hide address headers and build address book entries from incoming messages.

Internet Chameleon



Golden Gopher: The Gopher client's view clearly positions you in the menu structure. The utility shows how NetManage integrates ease of use in its Chameleon product.

The tree-oriented Gopher client works well (although we couldn't automatically view files using anything except Notepad). The FTP client is a mess as far as usability goes, with a slew of unintuitive buttons and nonstandard controls. With the single exception of the FTP client, this is a solid package that really provides everything you need at a reasonable price.

Internet Chameleon / NetManage / (408) 973-7171 / sales@netmanage.com / $199 / *Reader Service No. 650*

PIPELINES SMALL, FAST, EASY **TCP/IP**

TSR, DLL, or VxD?

For now, vendors implement the Internet TCP/IP stack in one of three ways: terminate-and-stay-resident programs (TSRs), Windows DLLs, or Windows virtual device drivers (VxDs). Which has the brightest future?

The Wollongong Group's Pathway Access is the only TSR-based package we examined. DOS TSRs consume precious memory below the 1,024K line and are relatively slow. They work best when accessing internetworked resources from a DOS prompt.

DLLs are essentially Windows executable files that use no DOS memory. Some corporate developers like DLL-based products such as **NetManage's** Internet Chameleon because it's easy to hook them in with new programs. They're also compatible with older PCs that can run Windows 3.1 only in standard mode.

In performance terms, however, **Frontier Technologies'** VxD-based TCP/IP stack, SuperTCP for Windows, can't be beat. It runs in 32-bit protected mode and communicates directly with hardware. VxDs are fast and allow Windows to keep network requests flowing. The only disadvantage: If you have a RAM-hungry DOS program, you may not have enough memory to start it up from a DOS box within Windows 3.1.

By next year, Windows' new version will settle the debate with its own VxD-based TCP/IP component.

Frontier Technologies' SuperTCP for Windows Frontier Technologies gave us more than we bargained for: a full-featured networking product that's at home in big PC-Unix environments (and priced to match). Fortunately, the straightforward instructions walked us deliberately through the installation.

We had no trouble installing the TCP/IP stack, and the detailed online help made it easy to configure the PPP connection. Our main criticisms: sketchy documentation and too many nested dialog boxes.

SuperTCP's bundled Internet utilities range from serviceable to slick. The FTP utility is busy but not hard to figure out. The mail client goes beyond simple e-mail, supporting the MIME standard and processing messages through the use of simple rules.

On the downside, there's no Gopher client, and the rudimentary news reader is both ugly and limited

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Windows Magazine, Dec 93

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Computer Shopper, Dec 93

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PC/Computing, July 94

"...gets the job done better than any other commercial mail package I've seen."
Wall Street Journal, Aug 93

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PC Magazine, Oct 93

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Infoworld, June 94

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in strength. For example, it doesn't allow you to sort messages in any way.

By late summer, Frontier plans to release SuperHighway Access, a $149 dial-up–only version. The stripped-down package drops high-end features such as servers (mail and FTP), but adds Gopher and Archie clients, plus a Web browser that's reportedly more advanced than Mosaic.

SuperTCP for Windows / Frontier Technologies / (414) 241-4555 / tcp@frontiertech.com / $395 / *Reader Service No. 651*

Spry's Air Series We wanted to review Spry's Internet In a Box, but what we got was more along the lines of Internet In a Bunch of Boxes.

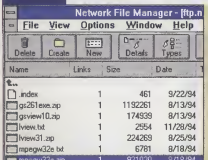
Last December, network specialist Spry announced plans to team with O'Reilly & Associates (publishers of Ed Krol's classic book *The Whole Internet*) on a joint venture called Internet In a Box. Spry's $299 Air collection contains the TCP/IP stack and Internet utilities that are scheduled to be part of the final package. (A copy of the Mosaic World Wide Web reader, the Krol book, and an optional access account will also be in the box.) We looked at a beta release of the Spry-O'Reilly bundle that did not include the final installation routine, so we couldn't evaluate whether Internet In a Box will live up to its name.

With one exception, Spry's Internet applications were less than impressive. Air News looks pretty but can't filter out message headers or follow threads in a newsgroup. The Air Mail client doesn't support MIME, and sending or receiving binary files is a clumsy two-step process. There's also a basic Gopher client.

The star of the suite is the Network File Manager, an FTP client that closely resembles the Windows File Manager. When you launch the program, it even arranges itself alongside a File Manager window to let you drag and drop files in either direction.

Spry's common interface is handsome, with readable WordPerfect-style icons and a Windows NT–style cursor—a combined arrow and hourglass—to give you visual feedback indicating that you can do other tasks while it works in the background.

Air 2.0



FTP à la File Manager: Simply drag remote files to your local PC. The Network File Manager is the star of Spry's forthcoming Internet utility product suite.

PIPELINES HOW BILLING WORKS

Net Costs

Money makes the world go round, but you'd never know that by looking at the growth of the Internet. In its current state, the Internet is a social phenomenon, a cooperative community designed to help researchers work together and give ordinary citizens direct access to the raw materials of knowledge. Best of all, it's essentially free.

That's about to change. Those who helped the Net become unimaginably large are horrified at the thought of paying for Internet services. (Check out Penn Jillette's August column, "Tolls for Thee?" page 320.) Even those who accept the notion of reasonable fees are concerned that the Internet could change from a low-cost populist experiment into a premium-priced capitalist tool. Restrictions on commercial activity are essentially gone, which has opened the door for CommerceNet and other profit-minded organizations to create mechanisms to track commercial transactions on the Net. And it has touched off a passionate debate.

The central question is: Who pays to ship the bits around? Uncle Sam is less likely to continue paying for a commercially oriented backbone.

It shouldn't be that expensive. According to one estimate, the entire cost of the U.S. portion of the Internet backbone is 50 cents per user, per month. As long as people continue to use the Net at current levels, that cost won't go up no matter how many new users connect. The trouble is, usage isn't remaining constant—it's increasing fast.

Charging for each packet sent isn't the answer. In that scenario, some useful services—such as FTP sites and list-based discussion groups—would simply disappear. And a flat fee doesn't provide any incentive for users to treat Net bandwidth as a scarce resource.

The most sensible proposal we've seen was floated by two economists at the University of Michigan. Their plan would prioritize packet transmissions based on an automated form of competitive bidding. Under their scheme, you could pay a premium to assign a high priority to packets, or you could choose reduced performance for a reduced bill. The proceeds would be used to create additional capacity on the Internet.

No matter how the fee issue is settled, it's obvious that dollars and deutsche marks will soon be zipping alongside bits and bytes on the Internet. The best of all possible worlds is an Internet with enough room for everyone—especially in the free and dirt-cheap zones that make it such a rich resource to so many different people. ED BOTT

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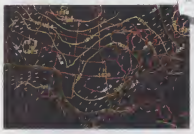
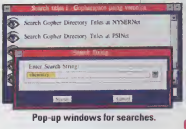
Supports Phone Books	✓
Enhanced Bookmarks	✓
Views Multiple Open Servers	✓
Supports Winsock Compatible TCP/IP Stacks	✓
Compatible with Other Windows Applications	✓



View multiple servers at one time.

WinGopher provides you with a graphical interface that uses pull-down menus and point-and-click functionality for easy Internet navigation. Using the Gopher protocol, WinGopher supports Archie, Veronica, and WAIS searching. FTP transactions and Telnet sessions are supported, as well as any Windows sound or video viewer. An image viewer and text viewer are included with WinGopher.



Pop-up windows for searches.

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Wollongong Group's PathWay Runtime 2.0/ PathWay Access 3.0 The PathWay line is worth evaluating if you're setting up a mixed PC-Unix network. But it's overkill for anyone who simply wants to establish a dial-up Internet connection.

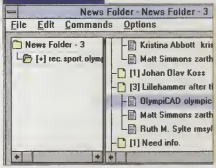
The Internet access applications are consistently underpowered and ungraceful. The combined mail and news reader is a good idea but, like all of the PathWay apps, suffers from a clumsy interface with blocky system fonts. The exception is a useful graphical keyboard remapper. For dial-up Internet access, look elsewhere.

PathWay Runtime 2.0, **PathWay Access 3.0**/ The Wollongong Group / (415) 962-7100 / $195 (DOS and Windows versions); $350 / *Reader Service No. 654*

The Pipeline Part application, part New York-based access service, The Pipeline provides its own thoughtful organization of the Internet. Its menus, which are mostly in plain English, actually make sense of the Net. The Pipeline's long-term mission is to license its software for use with other dedicated access providers to reduce long-distance phone charges.

Built-in applications include a Gopher client, fill-in-the-blanks FTP client, and a tree-and-viewer news reader that handles newsgroups with aplomb. It's all tied together with a proprietary, performance-tuned packet-transfer protocol. Overall, tasks seemed to execute faster than they did on a SLIP connection. The downside is its lack of support for a Web browser,

The Pipeline



Direct Approach: The Pipeline's threaded news reader excels. The program also manages requests in the background to speed response.

PIPELINES WHEN FACED WITH THE INTERNET, WHAT'S AN **ONLINE SERVICE** TO DO?

Toll Roads to the Net

Online services such as Delphi, CompuServe, and America Online are generally highly managed with centralized member directories, restrictions on message content in public forums, and a relentlessly ticking meter. Those attributes are completely at odds with the decentralized, virtually uncensored, usually free nature of the Internet. So how are the major online services dealing with their members' clamor for Internet access?

Instead of giving its members access to the Internet, CompuServe allows Internet users to Telnet to the online giant. When you connect from the Net, CompuServe asks you to select a speed (up to 9,600 bps), then throttles performance back to that level, no matter how fast your Internet connection.

The only other Internet service currently available is an e-mail gateway. There is an active Internet forum on CompuServe called GO INETFORUM, which provides up-to-date news and a place to talk about Net issues in CompuServe's more structured environment.

America Online also offers an Internet e-mail gateway. To go beyond mere messaging, you head for the Internet Center, a pretty but irritatingly slow icon- and list-based front end to newsgroups, mailing lists, Gopher servers, and WAIS databases. As of press time, America Online still had not delivered its promised FTP and Telnet utilities. At $3.50 per hour, almost twice what typical Internet access providers charge, it's an outrageously expensive way to access the Internet. Anyone who wants America Online's style of hand-holding will be far better off with The Pipeline (see above). It's more powerful and easier to use—and costs much less.

To get a sense of where Delphi is heading, just look at its full name—Delphi Internet Services Corp. Delphi, a corporate cousin of Bix, the Byte Information Exchange, is an online graybeard trying to turn the Internet into a fountain of youth. With its menu-based interface and organization by forums, Delphi resembles CompuServe. The difference? Individual section organizers blend Internet resources with their own material. A menu choice may pull a file from a distant FTP server or Telnet over to a weather server. You can also access the Internet directly via a command line. The online rates ($13 per month, plus connect-time fees) are low, but Delphi doesn't add enough to satisfy serious Net users. ED BOTT

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although that feature is due to be in the next upgrade.

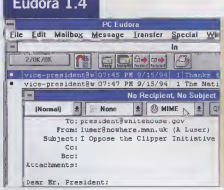
Basic Pipeline accounts cost about what most access providers charge. The software itself is free. If the toll charges aren't a stumbling block, The Pipeline is a fascinating option worth checking out.

The Pipeline / The Pipeline / (212) 267-3636 / info@pipeline.com / Free / *Reader Service No. 655*

The Internet for Less We also found a nearly complete suite of free and shareware tools that were a match for anything in shrink-wrap. (The free Mosaic World Wide Web reader is also a must.) All of the products mentioned below can be found in pub/pc/win3/winsock at ftp.cica.indiana.edu. We've included filenames that were accurate at press time. We also posted them on PC Contact as NETUTL.ZIP in data library 3 (Utilities/Misc.). (See page 250 for information on accessing PC Contact.)

- **Trumpet Winsock** (WINSOC.ZIP) is a $20 shareware package that includes a TCP/IP stack, command-line FTP utility, and basic Telnet package. It turned out to be one of our easier SLIP installations. However, Trumpet Winsock also offers a news reader that's hard to recommend.
- **HGopher** (HGPH24.ZIP) is a free Windows Gopher client good enough to be a commercial product. Best of all, it supports the new Gopher+ protocol, unlike other Gopher clients we saw.
- **WinVN** (WNVN082S.ZIP) is a news reader that sorts messages by threads. For serious news users, it's a must—and it's free.
- **Eudora 1.4** is the freely distributed version of QualComm's popular mail client. It supports MIME and sports an interface complete with icons and folders. To get it, anonymous FTP to qualcomm.com.

Eudora 1.4



No Postage Due: MIME support, shown here, allows mail messages to include multimedia files. Better yet, it won't cost you a dime.

Final Analysis: Today Chameleon or Pipeline . . . but Tomorrow?

1. For a full TCP/IP connection to the Internet today, Internet Chameleon wins our vote.
2. The Pipeline gives immediate Net gratification without networking headaches.
3. If you can wait for the next version of Windows, life will get much less complicated.

If you need to get on the Internet today, you won't go wrong picking up NetManage's Internet Chameleon for your Windows interface. Its installation routine outshines most we slogged through. At $199, it won't leave you scrounging for extra pennies to pay your service provider.

Take a look at The Pipeline if you live in an area with local access. If other service providers agree to use its friendly, powerful software, The Pipeline could become the hottest spot on the Internet.

Dead Parrot's Society By this time next year, most third-party TCP/IP drivers will be like the parrot in the classic Monty Python sketch: Defunct. Extinct. Moribund. In a word, dead. When the next version of Windows, code-named Chicago, arrives a few months from now, its built-in TCP/IP support will be a killer feature, literally. Designed to make Chicago a respectable citizen on big networks, TCP/IP support also gives users everything they need for a fast and easy dial-up connection to the Net.

Chicago supplies a set of standard services that will make third-party Internet utilities more interesting than anything you can use today. Its lowest network levels include a 32-bit protected-mode version of the TCP/IP stack and Windows Sockets programming interface. The combination should be compatible with virtually all Internet utilities. TCP/IP installation should be orders of magnitude easier.

Outside Support Right out of the box, you'll also get Remote Access Service (RAS)—a single-line, dial-up server that supports Point-to-Point Protocol (PPP) and password-protected user accounts with basic security. Start with a plain-vanilla PC connected to the Internet via a corporate network, add Chicago's RAS, and you're all set up to access the Net.

There should be an explosion of Net-specific Chicago add-ins and utilities. For newsgroup and hypermedia applications, Chicago's multithreading should provide a big boost in performance and productivity. Windows' Messaging Application Programming Interface (MAPI) should also pay off in more flexible mail clients that simultaneously handle Internet mail, faxes, corporate e-mail, and traffic from outside services like CompuServe. One thing's for sure, Chicago will raise the bar. We'll expect to see higher levels of software athleticism the next time we look at Net packages.

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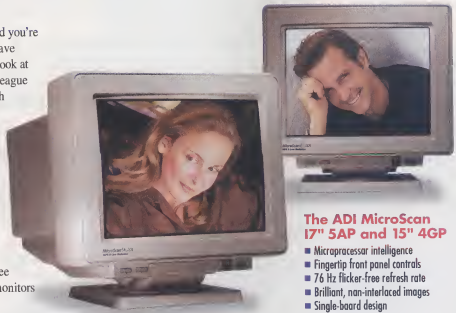

PC MAGAZINE EDITORS' CHOICE
March 16, 1993
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Online Fever

SYNOPSIS

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BEST WAY TO GO: *Which service meets your needs?* **163**

You know where you want to go, but the Internet's awesome diversity has you feeling like a doormat on the floor of Grand Central Station. Your business needs are simple—send e-mail, get the latest stock and news information. Sometimes the fastest way to get the information you need is to veer off the main thoroughfare and shop the surface streets—online services.

The three major online services—America Online, CompuServe, and Prodigy—can often be the fastest ways to get answers to your business questions. All three are either Windows-based or have Windows front ends designed to make navigating to the data you need easier. They've all recognized that merely offering megadata doesn't cut it any more. Folks need an easy way to get at that information—and fast.

To find out if the online services have turned the corner in putting information at hand, we delved into all three services online. Then we brought computer users—people just like you—into our Usability Labs and conducted tests with them at the wheel.

We found that the online world has come a long way since the days of text-based interfaces and obscure navigational commands. Now when you want to read a news story or get stock quotes, you can click on an easy-to-understand icon. That's not to say that the road signs are always well-lit on this particular stretch of the information highway. We found that even a task that should be simple—sending e-mail—can be surprisingly difficult at times.

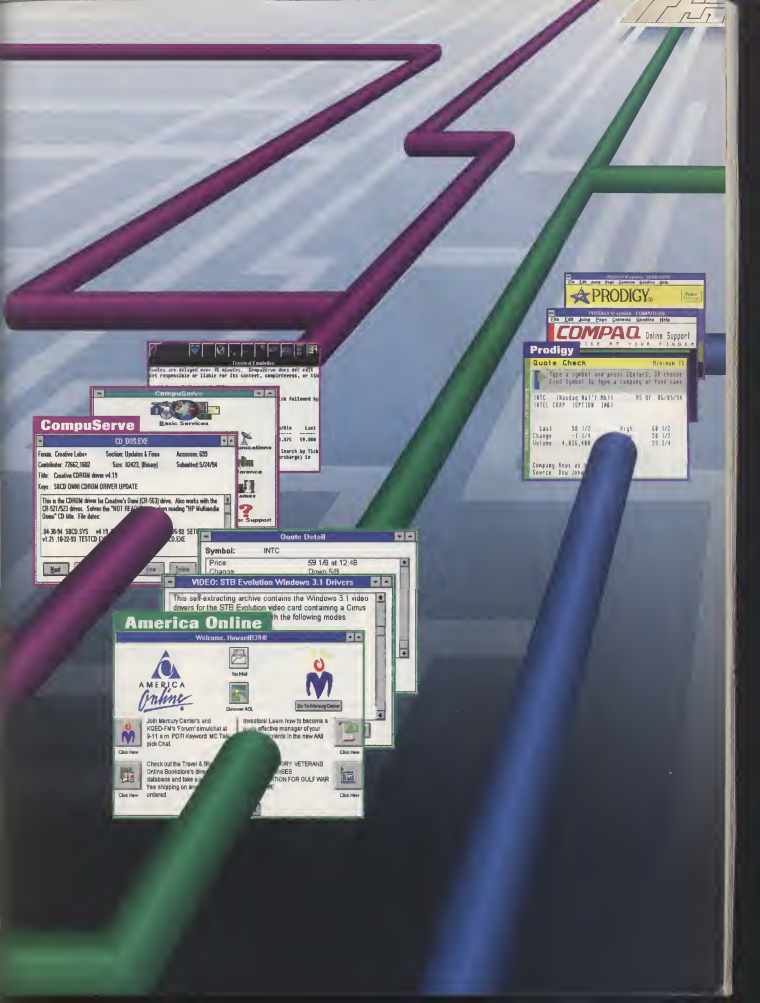
Given that Prodigy and CompuServe claim almost 2 million members, and America Online has yet to hit the million mark, the results of our tests may surprise you. If you'd like to hit the data highway immediately, read on for the best possible road map. Because if you can't figure out how to get at the information, it doesn't matter how much data awaits you online.

BY PRESTON GRALLA

AMERICA ONLINE: Our usability testers rated America Online's clean interface much higher than CompuServe's and Prodigy's. Each service's interface changes daily based on news and other events.

COMPUSERVE: When it comes to downloading patches and technical information, our usability testers gave the thumbs-up to CompuServe's extensive databases.

PRODIGY: This service got the nod from our usability testers for providing the easiest access to trading news, shown here for Intel.



PRODIGY
COMPAQ
Online Support
Prodigy
Quote Check
CompuServe
CD_DOS.EXE
Quote Detail
Symbol: INTC
VIDEO: STB Evolution Windows 3.1 Drivers
America Online
Welcome, Howard8394
AMERICA Online

Please, **Mr. Postman**

In a world of meetings, travel, and quality time for family, e-mail is sometimes the fastest and most convenient way to communicate. Subscribing to an online service is a simple way to tap into an e-mail network, but be sure to check out who you can talk to first.

For sheer elegance of design, as well as functionality, our testers gave America Online the thumbs-up for e-mail. A typical comment: America Online's mail handling is "well-designed . . . one of the best I've seen." It uses a simple screen and makes it clear where addresses, subject, and body text should go. To attach a file to a message, or detach it, you need only to click on an icon. There's a great address book that lets you create groups of addresses, which makes it easy to do a mass mailing.

Although the methods are similar, our testers found CompuServe's mail to be less intuitive than America Online's. It also lets you create groups and attach binary files easily. But sending mail to other services can require a fairly complex addressing scheme that makes it more difficult to use than America Online.

For Prodigy, our testers also reported that the basic layout for mail is confusing, and the capabilities less than adequate. We can't recommend Prodigy if e-mail is your primary interest. As far as the testers were concerned, the less said, the better.

SUMMARY

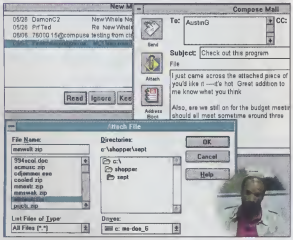
	America Online	CompuServe	Prodigy
Satisfaction	Easy to navigate.	Most tasks are cumbersome.	Interface is cluttered.
Productivity	Users loved it.	*Retain* means *save*, right?	Address book is hard to build.
Help System	All there at your fingertips.	Instructions are too cryptic.	Help rated vague.
Summary	★★★★	★★★	★★

★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★ *Good* ★★ *Acceptable* ★ *Poor* ✦ *Unacceptable*

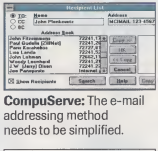
PC USABILITY Tested

Factor 1: **Exchanging E-Mail**

Exchanging e-mail between online services and the outside world is key. America Online took top honors for ease of communication—both within the service and to external addresses.



America Online: Simplicity, power, and logic were all cited by testers as among America Online's strengths when it came to mail handling. Our usability testers noted particularly how easy it was to send attachments and files with messages.



CompuServe: The e-mail addressing method needs to be simplified.

```
This message cannot be read or
may be too long, a file trans
or from a non-PRODIGY ID  Jo
item to a file on your compute

1) select COPY TO DISK for de
2) specify where to save this
3) select [OK]
4) after copy to disk complete
from PRODIGY to view or use th
ITEM  Non-PRODIGY COD Message
```

Prodigy: Don't try sending mail to other systems without additional software.

The Script

How We Tested E-Mail Exchange

We asked our usability testers to initiate and reply to mail in two ways—within the system they were testing and then to an MCI Mail address. They were then instructed to add mail recipients to the electronic address book provided by each service.

Lab Notes

What Our Testers Said About E-Mail

"I experienced difficulty finding information on attaching a text file to a created message in CompuServe."

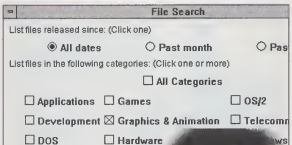
BUS DRIVER

"References to the other services must be delineated in the address line. CompuServe should put this in the help screens."

TECHNICAL SUPPORT MANAGER

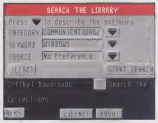
Factor 2: **Downloading Files**

Graphics and data files are the meat and potatoes of online access. Our testers deemed America Online the winner here, thanks to the ease with which they could find what they wanted.



America Online: Our testers cited America Online's excellent search tools as one reason they gave the service such high marks for ease in downloading files and graphics. They also appreciated the point-and-click access to many downloading tasks (for both work and play) that the service offers.

CompuServe: Users were confused by all of the places to look for files.



Prodigy: Searching for files should have been much easier, testers said.

The Script

How We Tested Online Downloading

We directed our testers to the technical support areas where they were instructed to locate a specific file, then download it to the hard drive of the PC.

Lab Notes

What Our Testers Said about Downloading

"I was able to do a 50,000-file search [in America Online] by entering the company name.

NETWORK ADMINISTRATOR

"I liked the fact that if a filename is already on your drive [with Prodigy], this is reported."

MAINFRAME ENGINEER

Beam Me Down, Scotty

The information you seek is out there—it sits on an unknown server, waiting. For many, the lure of online services is indeed that buried treasure of magazine articles, shareware, freeware, and software drivers.

Our testers found it was easier to find and download files on America Online than it was on CompuServe or Prodigy. Keep in mind, though, that the tests covered only the ease of finding and downloading files, not the number of files available. This is where CompuServe surpasses the competition.

It's easier to find and download technical files on America Online because they can all be found under a single umbrella—the Computing and Software area. Once you get there, it can be confusing to figure out where to go next. But handy tools for searching by category, date, and keyword do help.

Downloading files using CompuServe is more complicated at first because there's no central area in which to look—the files are in hundreds of forums across the entire sprawling service. While it may seem disorganized, this is also a strength—more and varied files are available than on the other services.

Our testers found Prodigy slightly more difficult to use than CompuServe. They liked that all of the files were in one location. But once they found the treasure chest they sought, they were a bit confused about how to find the jewels they wanted most.

SUMMARY

	America Online	CompuServe	Prodigy
Satisfaction	Downloading heaven.	Lots of files, but they're hard to find.	All files are in one place.
Productivity	Good tools for swift access.	*Retrieve* means *download*, right?	Once found, files are easy to download.
Help System	Help sometimes didn't.	Help with mark and retrieve is needed.	Unclear on locating specific files.
Summary	★★★★	★★★½	★★½

★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

Keeping Up-To-Date

Online services have an immediacy that no other medium for delivering information can match. Our testers again gave the nod to America Online, although it was close. Users found Prodigy's stock features more straightforward and easier to use than its competitors, but when it came to travel reservations and news, America Online and CompuServe made up the difference.

Each service has strengths and weaknesses in this area. For example, when you read a news story on Prodigy, you can click on a button that brings you to related articles or displays a photo. Graphics, such as maps, are often included in the stories. Similarly, when you get a stock quote, you can click on a button to get a list of financial news stories about that stock. What sets CompuServe apart from both its competitors is not simplicity so much as depth: There are multiple sources of financial, travel, and news information.

While testers gave America Online another thumbs-up overall, they complained about it occasionally forgoing the Windows interface for a text menu, as it does in its travel reservations area.

What gave America Online the boost was the clarity in its help section. We don't penalize a product when the testers need the help section—we penalize it when the testers don't *get* help when they go looking for it. Here, America Online's documentation gave the best assist, and as a result, got the highest overall productivity ratings from our testers.

SUMMARY

	America Online	CompuServe	Prodigy
Satisfaction	Users hated text interfaces.	Finding quotes is a breeze.	Smooth trip for flight info.
Productivity	News and weather are easy to find.	Capturing info is not as easy as in others.	Users liked the weather format.
Help System	Guidance is found here.	Data came, but didn't help.	Access is clear, but help wasn't.
Summary	★★★★	★★★	★★★

★★★★★*Excellent* ★★★★*Good* ★★★*Acceptable* ★★*Poor* ★*Unacceptable*

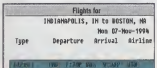
PC

USABILITY Tested

Factor 3: **Staying Informed**

Why wait until day's end for news, weather, and stock reports? Online data is updated as frequently as every 15 minutes—and America Online takes the cake for delivering information sweetly and succinctly.

America Online: This is one area where the rules are being rewritten in electronic distribution of news and information. In addition to the day's headlines, you can get text (but not graphics) of everything from the *New York Times* and *Chicago Tribune* to *Atlantic Monthly, New Republic,* and *Wired.*



CompuServe: Travel arrangements are particularly easy to make.

Prodigy: It's easy to click on a button for related photographs and sidebars.

The Script

How We Tested Weather, Finance, and Travel Data

We asked our usability testers to review stock prices for Intel and Ford, access information about flights between Los Angeles and New York, and get a weather report.

Lab Notes

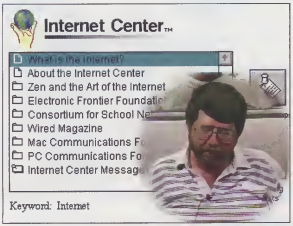
What Our Testers Said about Accessing Data

"The organization of the menus on the [Prodigy] screen is so easy to use, I didn't need Help."
CAD ENGINEER

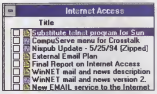
"The [America Online] host gateway interface was difficult to read—a very plain text-based window."
BUS DRIVER

Factor 4: **Accessing the Internet**

There's a difference between sending mail through the Internet and accessing information on the Internet. Any online service member can send mail—getting information requires America Online.



America Online: The only service that offers true Internet access, America Online gives you more than merely the ability to send e-mail. It does the seemingly impossible: gives you point-and-click access to many Internet resources. That way, you don't need to pay extra for Internet access software.



CompuServe: There's a forum for people who have Internet interests.

Prodigy: You can find an Internet glossary and BBS, but no access.

The Script

How We Tested Internet Access

We chose the common capability of sending mail through the Internet and asked our usability testers to send a message to an Internet address and look up President Clinton's Internet address (it's president@whitehouse.gov).

Lab Notes

What Our Testers Said about Internet Access

"Sending mail [on America Online] was very straightforward—except for [figuring out] the Internet addressing. That was not friendly."

NETWORK ENGINEER

"There was a lot of information on how to use it [on Prodigy, but no] details about actually getting into the system."

NETWORK ADMINISTRATOR

Increase Your **Net Worth**

So much ballyhoo surrounds the sudden accessibility of the Internet that an important subtlety gets lost. You can access the Internet—that is, get data from the multitude of servers and databases around the world—or you can use it simply as a medium for e-mail. As you get started in the online world, you're more likely to stick to the latter. That's how we derived our scoring results.

Prodigy and CompuServe only let you send and receive mail through the Internet (with varying degrees of pain). For the most part, our usability testers found sending mail through the Internet difficult because of its unique addressing conventions (see "Getting There from Here," page 154). Even then, finding an address—even for Bill Clinton—wasn't easy. America Online came out ahead because its internal addresses already resemble Internet addresses.

If you want to access Internet data from one of these services, go with America Online. It lets you access some of the popular Internet services: newsgroups, Gopher and WAIS databases, as well as mail and easy-to-use mailing lists. At press time, there were plans to also provide access to FTP and Telnet services.

All this isn't to say that the access to Internet services couldn't use improvement. There should be a way to read and respond to newsgroups offline.

SUMMARY

	America Online	CompuServe	Prodigy
Satisfaction	Trying to find Clinton's e-mail address is frustrating.	Users took a while to figure it all out.	Internet addressing is difficult.
Productivity	Sending to outside services is easy.	Few Internet messages are sent.	Many drawbacks hurt here too.
Help System	Help provided a boost.	Online help is incomplete.	Help is too cryptic.
Summary	★★½	★½	★½

★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

More **Bang** for Your **Bits**

The idea behind working offline is simple—when you're not connected, the meter's not ticking, so you're not being charged for "think time." Not surprisingly, it's difficult to work offline with these services—they've been designed to generate income.

CompuServe and America Online let you create mail offline, and then upload it to the service—but our testers found the process wasn't always intuitive. As we were going to press, Prodigy announced it planned a summer release of a Windows-based Bulletin Board Note Manager that will let you work offline more easily.

America Online is the best of the three when it comes to working offline. To do it well in CompuServe, you'll pay extra for CompuServe Navigator for Windows, available for $30 (which includes a $10 usage credit). It works like this: You tell it which forums you like to visit, and the program then downloads the headers—subject lines of messages—to your PC. You mark which messages you'd like to read, and Navigator then goes back online and downloads those messages, which you can read and respond to offline. Working this way, you can easily accomplish in 5 minutes what otherwise might take 30 minutes or more of online time. Translated into dollars, you could save as much as $4 every time you log on.

SUMMARY

	America Online	CompuServe	Prodigy
Satisfaction	Icons give users a good start.	Users found offline work simple.	Users wished offline work was possible.
Productivity	Creating mail is a snap.	Writing and sending is no problem.	No can do without new software.
Help System	Sent users on their way.	Offline capability is not apparent.	Help explained offline work unavailable.
Summary	★★★★	★★★	★½

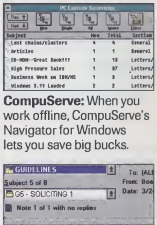
★★★★★*Excellent* ★★★★*Good* ★★★*Acceptable* ★★*Poor* ★*Unacceptable*

PC USABILITY Tested

Factor 5: **Working Offline**

A majority of our users didn't know working offline was possible, so they just logged on and started working. Our testers gave America Online top marks, but check out Prodigy's new offline assistance.

America Online: If you're using America Online, you can write as many messages as you need to before you log on and ship them off—a big money saver. With CompuServe and Prodigy, you'll pay anywhere from $15 to $50 (depending on features) for extra software to do the same thing.



CompuServe: When you work offline, CompuServe's Navigator for Windows lets you save big bucks.

Prodigy: Software for offline work has just been released for Prodigy.

The Script

How We Tested Working Offline

Organizing your e-mail before logging on is a big money-saver. We asked users to write an e-mail message, update their address book with the recipient's name, and then log on. Following intuition, though, the majority of our testers logged on first.

Lab Notes

What Our Testers Said about Working Offline

"Using the offline message manager [in America Online] was easy, but [I assumed] you could click on the send icon and be put in the log-on screen; what you get is a dead icon."
BUS DRIVER

"It was not clear that you could create a message without being logged on."
TECHNICAL SUPPORT MANAGER

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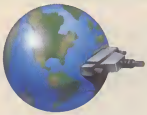

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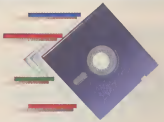

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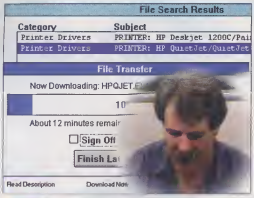
Circle 152 on reader service card.

PC USABILITY Tested

The Most Usable Service



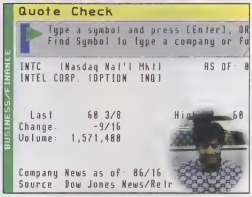
PC USABILITY Approved

America Online: A big winner on fundamentals like e-mail, America Online was also rated "exceptionally easy" when it came to finding and downloading files. ★★★★

How is usability different in word processing than in an online service? The meter is running with online services—you pay for making mistakes. That's why we focused on usability.

Looking strictly at usability, our testers were unanimous. Logical organization, elegant design, and intelligent use of icons and other navigational techniques made America Online a winner.

CompuServe: A runner-up in many categories, CompuServe was most lauded for its ease of access to data and its rich treasure of files. ★★★



Prodigy: Testers raved about Prodigy data services—one said getting stock quotes was so easy, "It must have been written by a stockbroker!" ★★

SATISFACTION: *Prodigy had low ratings here. Why? Users cited the non-Windows interface and advertisements on each screen as thorns. Prodigy is working on a pure Windows look.*

PRODUCTIVITY: *Following our script of a dozen tasks, our usability testers finished a much higher percentage of their tasks on America Online than they did on either Prodigy or CompuServe.*

HELP SYSTEM: *America Online's online help and manual assisted our testers a majority of the time. When testers sought help from other services, they didn't find it in more than half of their attempts.*

SUMMARY: *Even when they didn't like parts of America Online—like its ugly Easy Sabre interface—our testers raved about its simple point-and-click access to the most complex information sources.*

Lab Notes: What Our Testers Said about Online Services

America Online

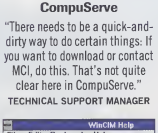
"File downloading was exceptionally easy, [as were] the file search, abstracts, and file descriptions."

BUS DRIVER

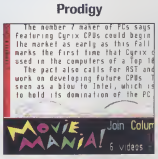
CompuServe

"There needs to be a quick-and-dirty way to do certain things: If you want to download or contact MCI, do this. That's not quite clear here in CompuServe."

TECHNICAL SUPPORT MANAGER



Prodigy



"There are these subliminal messages [onscreen advertising] on the Prodigy screen."

NETWORK ENGINEER

SCORECARD — AMERICA ONLINE CROSSES THE FINISH LINE FIRST

Factor	America Online	CompuServe	Prodigy
1. Exchanging E-Mail *Weighting Factor: 35%*	★★★★ Easy to navigate, attach files, and go.	★★★ Step-by-step instructions, but too cryptic.	★★ Road closed to other online services without add-on software.
2. Downloading Files *Weighting Factor: 20%*	★★★★ Straightforward and user-friendly.	★★★½ Lots of files; hard to find among forums.	★★½ Needs better search capabilities.
3. Accessing Data *Weighting Factor: 20%*	★★★★ Top choice for up-to-date information.	★★★ Unmatched depth of information.	★★★ Testers rated these sections highly intuitive.
4. Accessing the Internet *Weighting Factor: 15%*	★★½ The only one with true Internet access.	★½ No Internet info, and even sending mail is tricky.	★½ Only Internet info is a glossary and a BBS.
5. Working Offline *Weighting Factor: 10%*	★★★★ Easy to compose mail offline.	★★★ Need Navigator software to work offline.	★½ No can do without new software.
Verdict *100%*	★★★★ So easy, it's hard to believe you're online.	★★★ Database depth, but not always easy to use.	★★ Rock-solid for data, but that's it.

★★★★★ *Excellent* ★★★★ *Good* ★★★ *Acceptable* ★★ *Poor* ★ *Unacceptable*

How We Scored

For every usability-tested story, a script is designed that consists of a set of common business tasks. We report test results in three key areas: user satisfaction, productivity, and help. The satisfaction score reflects users' preferences on a scale of one to five (five is best). The productivity score reflects the percentage of tasks completed, and the help score reflects the percentage of documentation and online help reference that actually helped the testers.

How We Tested

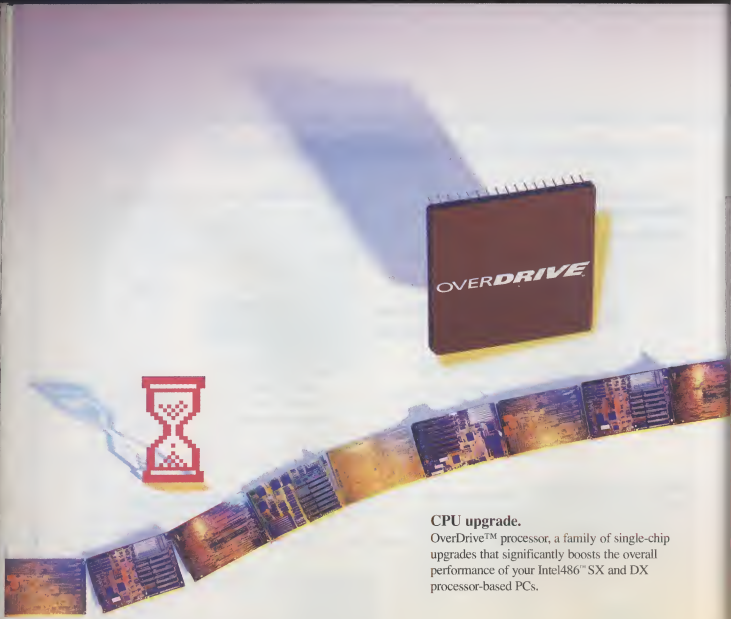
To evaluate the three most popular online services, we brought users of varying backgrounds and levels of experience into our Usability Labs. Some had already used one or more of the online services we were testing; others were seeing them for the first time.

We urged our testers to "think out loud." Some of their "thoughts" appear throughout the article.

Each user was given the same assignments, which took about ten hours to complete. We had them find executable files and updates in the tech support forums and then download them.

We asked our testers to initiate and reply to e-mail in several ways—within the online service they were testing, to an MCI Mail address, and to an Internet address.

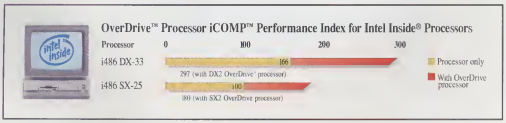
To test the ease of keeping up-to-date, we asked our users to review the stock prices for Intel and Ford, access a list of flights for a Los Angeles-to-New York business trip, and get a weather report.



CPU upgrade.
OverDrive™ processor, a family of single-chip upgrades that significantly boosts the overall performance of your Intel486™ SX and DX processor-based PCs.

Slow performance.
Your software is bogged down, but you can't buy a new PC right now.

To speed up your 486,



Call 1-800-538-3373, ext. 178.†
To find out more about the IntelSX2™ and IntelDX2 OverDrive processors and to receive a free demo disk.

Speeds up software.
Microsoft Excel® 4.0 runs 83% faster and Microsoft Word® 2.0 65% faster when you upgrade a i486™ SX-33 processor with an IntelDX2™ 66 MHz OverDrive processor.

Free OverDrive™ processor demo disk.

To see how much faster your software runs with an OverDrive™ processor, call 1-800-538-3373, Ext. 178 for your free demo diskette. Or simply complete this card and drop it in the mail. Either way, it's the right path to take.

Please answer the following questions to help us better serve you. Thank you.

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   IntelDX4™____ Pentium™____

2. How many OverDrive processors are you or your company interested in purchasing?
   0____ 1-9____ 10-49____ 50+____

3. When are you interested in purchasing an OverDrive processor(s)?
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Microsoft Excel* 4.0 runs 83% faster and Microsoft Word* 2.0 65% faster when you upgrade a i486™ SX-33 processor with an IntelDX2™ 66 MHz OverDrive processor.

†For European residents, call +44 (0) 793 431155, and ask for infopack IOD11
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follow the upgrade path.

OverDrive™ processor family of products

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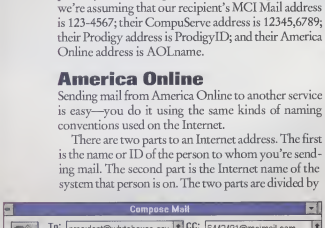
Getting **There** From **Here**

All the online services promise to let you send e-mail to just about everyone on the planet—and it's generally true. That's the good news. The bad news is that it can be an incredibly difficult and frustrating task—one often not worth the effort. But if you follow this primer, the job will be much easier. Note that you'll always have to know the specific e-mail address of the person you're sending mail to. In the examples below, we're assuming that our recipient's MCI Mail address is 123-4567; their CompuServe address is 12345,6789; their Prodigy address is ProdigyID; and their America Online address is AOLname.

America Online

Sending mail from America Online to another service is easy—you do it using the same kinds of naming conventions used on the Internet.

There are two parts to an Internet address. The first is the name or ID of the person to whom you're sending mail. The second part is the Internet name of the system that person is on. The two parts are divided by an @ sign. For example, if you were sending mail to Joe Bigelow on the Othermail.com service, the address would be: JoeBigelow@othermail.com. In Internet parlance, each entity has a three-letter designation. For instance, *.com* stands for company, *.edu* for educational institution, *.gov* for government, and *.org* for non-profit organization.



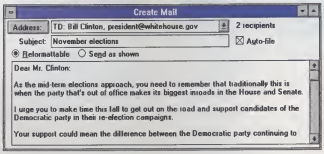
Sending e-mail to President Clinton via America Online and copying someone on another system is straightforward.

Service	Address
MCI Mail	123-4567@mcimail.com OR 123-4567@mci
CompuServe	12345.6789@compuserve.com OR 12345.6789@cis
Prodigy	ProdigyID@prodigy.com OR ProdigyID@prodigy
Internet	name@entity.xxx

CompuServe

Use these formats when you need to send mail from CompuServe to people on another online service:

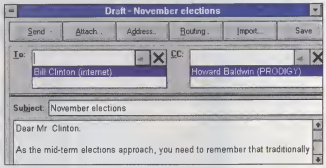
Service	Address
MCI Mail	MCIMAIL:123-4567
America Online	AOLname@aol.com
Prodigy	ProdigyID@prodigy.com
Internet	name@entity.xxx



CompuServe uses addressing conventions that are similar to those of America Online to send mail to other online systems, such as the Internet.

Prodigy

There is no way to send mail to another service from directly within Prodigy. You'll need ConnectSoft's add-on program for Windows, E-Mail Connection for Prodigy, which costs $14.95. There's also a "universal" version that sells for $49.95 and lets you access other e-mail services such as AppleLink, GEnie, EMBARC, and NewsCard through MCI, Prodigy, CompuServe, or LAN-based mail systems. To send mail to other services with it, you need only to know the user ID on the other service; there's no need for complex addressing schemes.



To send mail to other systems with Prodigy, you need ConnectSoft's add-on package, E-Mail Connection.

everything IS NEW.
nothing IS THE WAY it WAS.
it's the wake-UP CALL for a NEW way of WORKING.
TIME TO rise and shine.

INTRODUCING 1-2-3 RELEASE 5. NOW THE LEGENDARY SPREADSHEET BRINGS MORE PEOPLE TO THE NUMBERS AND THE NUMBERS TO LIFE.

1-2-3® has always helped individuals become more productive. Now it goes to a new realm—workgroup productivity. With strengthened ties to Lotus Notes® and new, sophisticated routing features, workgroups are using 1-2-3 Release 5 to make decisions, reach consensus and explore possibilities.

No other spreadsheet has the features of 1-2-3 Release 5. Features that make everyday spreadsheet tasks easier. Features that help you move from task to task fluidly. Maximum productivity, minimum effort.

TAP THE POWER OF NOTES WHEN YOU'RE IN 1-2-3. TAP THE POWER OF 1-2-3 WHEN YOU'RE IN NOTES.

Say you're working on the annual budget in 1-2-3. You can save your spreadsheet in Notes. Then share ideas and information with colleagues working on the same budget at the same time.

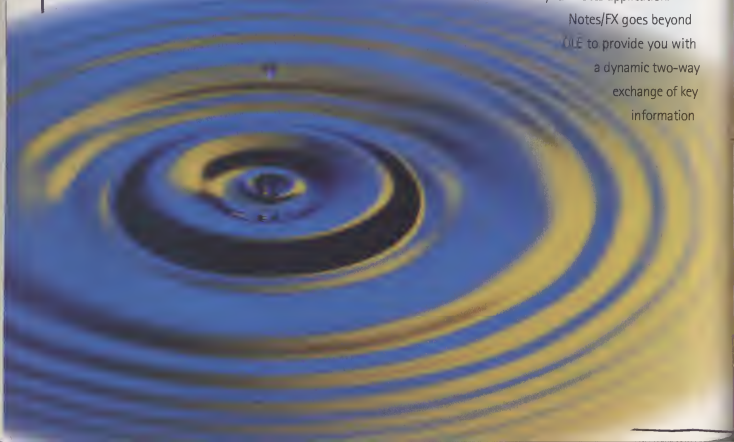
Lotus NOTES READY

Any changes to your spreadsheet are automatically synchronized and distributed thanks to Notes replication technology. Plus Notes' security protects the integrity of your data.

When you're working in Notes and want to crunch numbers, prepare budgets or perform "what-if" analyses, you can launch into 1-2-3 with Notes/FX™ 1.1—to get the power of 1-2-3 right in your Notes application.

Notes/FX goes beyond OLE to provide you with a dynamic two-way exchange of key information

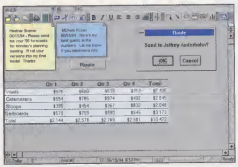
freedom of MOVEMENT, NOT chains of COMMAND.



between Notes and 1-2-3. So you can roll that 1-2-3 information back into any Notes application.

POWERFUL WORKGROUP FEATURES EVEN WITHOUT NOTES.

1-2-3's powerful Version Manager™ lets each person in your workgroup save multiple sets of charts to any name range. So you know the who, what, when and why of every change all the time.



1-2-3's Range Routing lets you share data with colleagues—sequentially or all at once—collecting their comments and input into a single document.

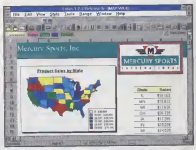
Plus, unlike other spreadsheets, 1-2-3 can designate particular ranges for comment or review by particular users, rather than routing the entire worksheet. Range Routing lets you mail the spreadsheet range to workgroup members for input, track progress, then roll everyone's ideas back into your file, complete with comments and changes tracked as versions.

1-2-3 Release 5 worksheets and ranges can be routed using either VIM or MAPI based e-mail and can be routed either serially or in parallel.

MAXIMUM PRODUCTIVITY, MINIMUM EFFORT.

1-2-3 Release 5 is packed with innovative new features designed to help you get more done with less effort.

SmartMasters™ are predesigned and customizable templates of everyday business forms—like expense reports, invoices and purchase orders—with built-in intelligence to guide you through common tasks in record time. Or create custom SmartMasters for yourself or your workgroup.



1-2-3 Release 5 features Lotus Maps. It's the easiest, most effective way to analyze your spreadsheet data geographically.

With Lotus Maps you can create instant maps of geographic data. Select a range of data and watch 1-2-3 Release 5 create the appropriate map with color-coding based on data ranges. 1-2-3 Release 5 ships with maps for the world by country, U.S. by state, Canada by province, Europe, Mexico, Japan, Taiwan and Australia.

1-2-3 Release 5 features seamless integration with Lotus Approach® database to easily create data entry forms and generate reports and mailing labels.

With Fast Format you can apply the formatting you've designed for one range to any other range in the worksheet—with one click of the mouse.

One-Step Charting lets you build a chart complete with labels, titles and legends, all in a single step.

Drag-and-Fill fills in ranges from other documents in just one step. And our improved OLE 2.0 Drag-and-Drop lets you move copy or data across worksheets or files fast.

Multi-page Print Preview lets you view up to nine spreadsheets on your screen before you print.

Taken all together, the new 1-2-3 is loaded with enhancements that make getting the job done a whole lot easier—alone or in a workgroup. And 1-2-3 Release 5 gives you the best compatibility with 1-2-3 for DOS of any spreadsheet. To learn more about 1-2-3 Release 5, visit your Lotus Authorized Reseller or call **1-800-TRADE-UP, ext. 9970*** for a free demo disk. A 1-2-3 upgrade costs $119.**

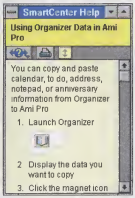
Lotus
Working Together®

NEW SMARTSUITE 3.0. A MAJOR RELEASE TO HELP YOU AND YOUR TEAM WORK TOGETHER.

To work better people need powerful desktop applications, built for both individual and team productivity. SmartSuite® 3.0 is exactly that. It's the best suite for this new way of working because it's the only suite built to optimize Lotus Notes.

The applications that make up SmartSuite have been upgraded in some very important ways—so they work harder and work together better than ever.

1-2-3 Release 5 is packed with new features like SmartMasters spreadsheets templates, Lotus Maps for geographic visuals of data, Smart Assistants to guide you, seamless integration with Approach database, Range Routing for mailing spreadsheet ranges, OLE 2.0 Drag and Drop, and, of course, Lotus Notes Integration.



Help Card, one of SmartSuite's powerful help tools, guides you through cross-application tasks.

The new Lotus Approach 3.0 offers unprecedented ease-of-use, PowerClick™ reporting, X10™ technology (our new, exclusive, speed-optimized architecture) and the easiest-to-design forms, mailing labels and cross-tabs on the market.

Ami Pro® 3.1 offers powerfully fast word processing (49% faster than Word, 103% faster than WordPerfect®[1]), low memory/hard disk requirements (4MB RAM, 15MB for complete installation), with proofing tools, collapsible click and drag outlining, revision marking, powerful macro language and automatic list renumbering. There are over 55 predesigned style sheets for memos, faxes, reports and more. Built-in charting & in-context drawing tools. Ami Pro also seamlessly imports documents from other word processors.

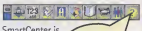
Freelance Graphics® 2.1 features task and industry specific SmartMasters, a unique 3-step process to create presentations, charting and drawing, presentation management and improved import/export capabilities.

And Organizer™ 1.1 offers easy linking for cross-referencing, flexible printing, group scheduling and nifty integration with Ami Pro so you can create monthly calendars in Ami Pro from Organizer appointments.

SMARTSUITE 3.0 IS A BETTER INTEGRATED SUITE ACROSS THE BOARD.

The integration in SmartSuite begins with a consistent look and feel across applications—they share a common user interface, menus, SmartIcons® and a Live Status Bar.

SmartCenter, the headquarters for cross-application services, is always there to help you switch or launch applications. You can customize its icon palette into the configuration that's most convenient for you.



SmartCenter is always there to help you launch applications or switch between them. And Bubble Help is right there for you-all you do is point.

SuiteAnswers are cross-application help tools which include a SmartSuite Guided Tour and task-oriented Help Cards—plus the new ScreenCam™ for creating audio/visual "screen movies." It's the only help service in Windows™ that stays up as you move between applications.

Smart Assistants are your step-by-step guide through common tasks.

And our powerful 1-2-3/Approach database integration lets you analyze and format 1-2-3 data, taking full advantage of Approach's easy-to-use

forms and reports, dynamic crosstabs to pivot rows and columns and tools for creating summaries or viewing data in several formats.

SMARTSUITE, THE NOTESREADY SUITE, EXTENDS THE DESKTOP TO THE WORKGROUP.

SmartSuite 3.0 includes powerful workgroup enhancements. But for an even higher level of workgroup capability, just add Lotus Notes and see what happens:

Combined with Lotus Notes, 1-2-3 Release 5 becomes a model management system that lets team members search a library of worksheets.

Add Notes to Ami Pro 3.1 and it becomes a real "workgroup processor." Use the built-in Notes database for efficient, secure document sharing and tracking. And you can format your Notes or cc:Mail® messages directly in Ami Pro.

Approach 3.0, the top-rated Windows database, becomes a shared reporting, forms and analysis tool. Its advanced integration with Lotus Notes lets you build sophisticated, information-intensive workgroup applications and join Notes data to other types of databases, from dBASE to SQL.

And Freelance Graphics 2.1, used with Notes, becomes a presentation storage system, a library of past presentations, which a team can browse and pull from to create new ones.

For more information on SmartSuite Release 3.0 and each of the 5 top applications that make up SmartSuite, visit your Lotus Authorized Reseller or for a comprehensive multimedia overview call **1-800-TRADE-UP, ext. 9987*** for the free Lotus Product Gallery CD. A SmartSuite upgrade costs $299.††

Lotus NOTES READY

the COMMITTEE IS dead. long live the TEAM.

Lotus
Working Together™

SMARTSUITE 3.0

SmartCenter
(to move between applications)

SmartMasters
(for predesigned templates)

Fast Format
(apply styles throughout documents)

ScreenCam
(to put your ideas in motion)

Smart Assistants
(to guide you)

Configurable Single Install
(for easy one-step installation)

Small Footprint On Your PC
(the most efficient suite available)

1-2-3/Approach Integration
(database power in your spreadsheet)

Lotus NOTES READY

1-2-3 RELEASE 5

SmartMasters
(useful predesigned templates)

Lotus Maps
(geographic visuals of data)

Lotus Approach Integration
(for extra database power)

Smart Assistants
(to guide you)

Range Routing
(for mailing spreadsheet ranges)

Direct Access To Database Files
(open dBASE and Paradox® files directly into 1-2-3)

OLE 2.0 Drag-And-Drop
(move or copy data, with visual mouse cues)

APPROACH 3.0

PowerClick Reportwriter
(for wysiwyg design)

Smart Assistants
(to guide you)

InfoBox
(instant on-screen manipulation)

X10 Speed Architecture
(for blazing speed)

Lotus 1-2-3 Integration
(for working with 1-2-3)

PowerKey™ Technology
(for direct access to existing data)

Dynamic Crosstabs
(for drag-and-drop analysis)

AMI PRO 3.1

New Proofing Tools
(for easy document proofing)

Collapsible Click-And-Drag Outlining
(simplifies organization)

Revision Marking
(edit documents without confusion)

New Style Sheets
(more professionally designed templates than ever)

Text Styling
(make your e-mail look better)

WordPerfect Switchkit®
(the move from DOS is painless)

Stick-It Notes
(add comments and messages)

FREELANCE GRAPHICS 2.1

Unique Three-Step Process
(for quick and easy presentations)

One-Click Charting
(access a library of charts and drawings with one click)

Page Sorter
(presentation management at a glance— review and rearrange with ease)

Import/Export
(more file formats than ever— including Harvard/DOS and PowerPoint® 3.0)

ORGANIZER 1.1

Easy Linking
(makes cross-referencing simple)

Flexible Printing
(for your manual planner, mailing labels from your address book)

Group Scheduling
(use with cc:Mail to set up meetings with anyone on your WAN or LAN)

Real Time Access
(instantly view co-workers' busy and free time)

how the NEW SMARTSUITE 3.0 HELPS workgroups work.

The new SmartSuite 3.0. Featuring major new releases of 1-2-3, Ami Pro, Approach database and Freelance Graphics—plus the popular and powerful personal information manager Organizer—this is the ultimate integration of your most important desktop tools. For more information on SmartSuite Release 3.0 and each of the 5 top applications that make up SmartSuite, visit your Lotus Authorized Reseller or for a comprehensive multimedia overview call **1-800-TRADE-UP, ext. 9987*** for the free Lotus Product Gallery CD. A SmartSuite upgrade costs $299.††

Lotus
Working Together

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FEATURE ROUNDUP

HOW THE ONLINE SERVICES WE TESTED **COMPARE** TO OTHERS

	Additional Costs	Year Founded & No. of Members	Basic Data	Specialties
America Online (800) 827-6364 (703) 448-8700 $9.95 per month for 5 hours. *Reader Service No. 656*	$3.50 each additional hour	1985 900,000	E-mail, news, sports, weather, finance, travel, shopping, and 600 BBSs.	Technical support for 300 hardware and software companies, Internet access, mobile access for pen and palmtop computers, interactive newspapers and magazines.
CompuServe Information Service (800) 848-8199 (614) 457-8600 $8.95 per month includes connection to basic services (e-mail, travel, shopping, finance, and games) plus the equivalent of 60 three-page mail messages. *Reader Service No. 657*	Access to CompuServe forums: $4.80 per hour (billed in 1-minute increments) for 1,200- and 2,400-baud modems, or $9.60 per hour for 9,600- and 14,400-baud modems. Nominal fee for messages to MCI Mail, telex, fax, and postal delivery. Incoming or outgoing Internet messages cost 15 cents for the first 7,500 characters and 5 cents for each additional 2,500 characters.	1979 1.8 million (300,000 accounts; CompuServe estimates six users at each account)	E-mail, news, sports, weather, reference, shopping, finance, games, travel, plus 2,000 databases and discussion groups.	Technical support for 700 hardware and software companies, international service for England, France, and Germany.
Prodigy (800) 776-3449 $4.95 for software shipping and handling; $14.95 per month for 30 e-mail messages and 2 hours on basic features (BBSs, Easy Sabre, Dow Jones Co. News, and stock quotes). *Reader Service No. 658*	Additional messages cost 25 cents each; additional access to the four basic features costs $3.60 per hour. $29.95 per month for 25 hours of bulletin board usage.	1990 2 million	E-mail, news, sports, weather, finance, children's education, and 850 BBSs.	Interactive ESPN, its own news service, music, movies, and other sound clips.
Other Online Services* **Delphi Internet Services** (800) 695-4005 (617) 491-3342 $10 per month for 4 hours; $20 per month for 20 hours. *Reader Service No. 659*	Additional hours cost $4 each on the $10 per month plan, and $9 (prime time) or $1.80 each (off-peak hours) on the $20 per month plan. Prime time access (7 a.m. to 6 p.m., local time weekdays) costs more based on the service used. Internet access costs an additional $3 per month.	1981 100,000	Computer special-interest groups, business and finance information, real-time conferences.	Internet access, custom forums designed by members. Windows interface to the Internet under development.
Dow Jones News/Retrieval (800) 522-3567 $1.50 per 1,000 characters downloaded. *Reader Service No. 660*	Costs for Dun & Bradstreet, Tradeline, and other investment reports vary; corporate flat fees available starting at $500.	1974 200,000	Newswires, industry and financial information, weather, and sports.	Full-text search of more than 1,500 publications; SEC and government data.
GEnie (301) 251-6475 $8.95 per month for 4 hours. *Reader Service No. 661*	Additional hours cost $3 each. $9.50 per hour for access between 8 a.m. and 6 p.m., local time on weekdays. $6 per hour surcharge for 9,600-baud modems. Surcharges vary depending on fax, stock, news, Official Airline Guide, and database access.	1985 150,000	E-mail, Reuters, weather, sports, travel, finance, 240 BBSs, discussion groups.	Internet access, real-time forums, 40 online mail-order stores, access to more than 900 publications. Windows interface now available.
Ziff-Davis Interchange Online Network (617) 252-5000 Expect to pay between $10 and $15 for about 5 hours per month based on subscription to one service (Washington Post Online or Starwave Sports, for example). *Reader Service No. 662*	Additional services will cost extra.	1994 Available fourth quarter	Computing information, news, finance, weather, sports.	User group discussions linked to online reference material.

*THESE SERVICES WERE NOT REVIEWED, BUT THE INFORMATION IS PROVIDED FOR COMPARISON. SOURCES: ONLINE SERVICES AND SIMBA RESEARCH

If the information highway is anything like L.A. freeways you'll need all the help you can get.

You have a fax/modem, network connections and home or office PC and/or notebook with remote capabilities. Everything you need to shift into high gear on today's electronic Autobahn.

But choose the wrong software, and everything could come to a screeching halt.

Fortunately, Smith Micro has a complete line of telecommunication software that's powerful, yet flexible and easy-to-use. Designed for use in today's DOS and Windows environments, it'll have you cruising along in no time at all.

For example, HotLine® — the ultimate telephone management tool — greatly accelerates productivity with auto-dial capabilities and user-defined directories.

HotDisk® overtakes remote control in both speed and efficiency by allowing remote access to a computer's disk drive that's not only faster, but completely invisible to a user at the host's location, as well.

LAN users can keep things moving with CrossConnect® — the cost-effective network solution that lets users gain full remote access through a single computer — and dial out through a shared modem.

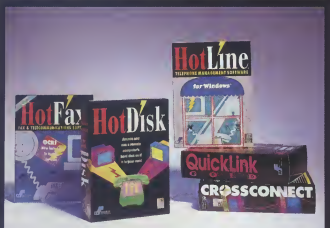
And QuickLink Gold® for Windows and HotFax® for DOS combine fax and data communications in a single, streamlined application.

Available from the same source as QuickLink II™ — the world's most widely used communication software — each product is backed by a proven track record of performance and the industry's most experienced technical support.

So call 1-800-964-SMS! for more information.

Then get ready to hit the highway with telecommunication software from Smith Micro.

SMITH MICRO SOFTWARE



Call for the name and number of your nearest dealer.

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Circle 233 on reader service card.

The Best **Way to Go**

While our testers rated America Online the most usable online service, it's not necessarily the best service for everyone. For your particular needs, one of the other online services might be better.

Who delivers the best e-mail service? While any of the services will let you send e-mail to other members, testers found that America Online has the best mail-handling abilities.

Who has compiled the most complete collection of shareware and other downloadable files? The place to turn is CompuServe. Just about all of the scores of special interest forums on CompuServe are stocked full of downloadable files.

Where is the most complete collection of databases? Again, CompuServe is the place to go. You should be prepared to spend some serious money, though: Most of these databases carry surcharges for time spent on them, information retrieved, or a combination of the two—and you can quickly run up some steep bills.

What is the best source of tech support for hardware and software? CompuServe has become the de facto standard online service to use for technical support. Scores of companies—everyone from industry giants like Microsoft to small shareware firms—sponsor forums on CompuServe where you can ask technical questions and download the latest drivers and patches.

Who offers the simplest pricing structure? If the pricing information in the preceding table confused you, you're not alone. One month's charges for e-mail and downloading can stack up. We recommend America Online's simple setup.

Which online service offers the best access to current news, sports, travel, and stock quotes? Our usability testers rated America Online just a nose better, but all do well at presenting weather and current news stories.

PRESTON GRALLA *is the software editor for the Interchange Online Network, an online service set to be deployed by Ziff-Davis later this year.*

DECISION MAKER

WHAT'S THE BEST **ONLINE SERVICE** FOR YOUR NEEDS?

1 Choose the factor most important to you. **2** Choose the next most important factor. **3** What else is important? **4** For your needs, the best product to buy is . . .

E-Mail	Ability to Work Offline	Ease of Downloading Files	America Online
		Ease of Accessing Data	CompuServe
	Internet Access	Ease of Downloading Files	America Online
		Ease of Accessing Data	America Online
Ease of Downloading Files	Technical Support	E-Mail	CompuServe
		Ease of Accessing Data	CompuServe
	Access Speed	E-Mail	America Online
		Ease of Accessing Data	America Online
Ease of Accessing Data	Price	Ease of Downloading Files	Prodigy
		E-Mail	America Online
	Tracking Costs	Ease of Downloading Files	CompuServe
		E-Mail	America Online

The TI TravelMate™ family of notebooks offers the perfect workmate to increase your productivity. Because different kinds of people have very different demands, we have created two series – the 4000E and the 4000M – to meet your individual needs.

Every member of the TravelMate family features a powerful 486 processor – up to 75MHz. Combined with monochrome or brilliant color displays, superb battery life, and a variety of configurations, you can be more productive even when you're on the go.

The perfect desktop replacement. The TravelMate E Series.

Looking for the expansion capabilities of a desktop coupled with the portability and convenience of a notebook? Turn to the TravelMate 4000E Series. Partner the TravelMate 4000E with TI's Intelligent Docking System and you have the ultimate desktop PC replacement. Just insert any of the nine models of TravelMate 4000E notebooks into the Intelligent Docking System, push a button and the auto-load mechanism does the rest. When you're ready to hit the road, simply click an icon and the system saves the files you're working on,

The TravelMate Notebooks Now there's a perfect

TravelMate E Series

- Nine 486 models ranging from a 25MHz to a racy IntelDX4™/75MHz
- 4mm full-travel keyboard with a desktop feel, Microsoft BallPoint™ mouse with QuickPort™ connection
- Desktop Replacement: Intelligent Docking System with 6 ISA and 2 PCMCIA card slots as well as 4 drive bays for additions such as hard drives, CD-ROM, tape drives and more

75MHz now under $4,000*

*Estimated street price, E Series Model. Dealer prices may vary. IntelDX4 is a trademark and the Intel Inside logo is a registered trademark of Intel Corp.

closes Windows™ and ejects your TravelMate 4000E. Then you're on your way – that's true desktop replacement.

A new dimension in portable computing. The TravelMate M Series.

If you're looking for a notebook computer that is multimedia-ready, TI brings you the new TravelMate 4000M Series. From the moment you see our TravelMate 4000M, you'll appreciate how much performance it packs into its sleek new design and conveniently located integrated pointing device.

Add the light-weight, battery/AC-powered Portable CD-ROM Docking System and you have an integrated portable multimedia system. Now you can tap into the growing library of information and applications available on CD-ROM. Use the TravelMate 4000M as an incredibly powerful presentation tool, training or auditing system and more – complete with sound and full-motion video capability.

To find out how you can get together with the ideal TravelMate, just call **1-800-TI-TEXAS** (1-800-848-3927).

from Texas Instruments. mate for everyone.

TravelMate M Series

- Six 486 models ranging from a 25MHz to a racy IntelDX4™/75MHz
- Built-in PCMCIA slot, integrated pointing device, SCSI II interface, 16-bit sound, internal microphone and speaker, and a 16-bit MIDI port
- Portable CD-ROM Docking System option with a double-speed CD-ROM drive and built-in stereo speakers

EXTENDING YOUR REACH™

TEXAS INSTRUMENTS

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Circle 163 on reader service card.

Dialing For Data

SYNOPSIS

FEDWORLD: *Tax dollars turned into useful information.* **167**

SOFTWARE CREATIONS: *Voted the best for its games—but oh, those Windows tools!* **167**

AUDIOPHILE NETWORK: *Buying tips on stereo and video goods.* **167**

WINDOWS ONLINE: *1.4GB of troubleshooting tips.* **168**

HOUSENET: *Hits the nail on the head for home improvement.* **168**

INFOBOARD: *Learn how to start a BBS.* **168**

DALLAS REMOTE IMAGING GROUP: *Reach for the stars.* **169**

GREENPEACE ENVIRONET: *Keep up-to-date on endangered species.* **169**

Silently, while no one was looking, a rich system of pit stops got built out on the outskirts of the I-Way. Think these pit stops are boring blips for roadkill and little else? Think they're just information cul-de-sacs? Think again. Every day, millions of businesspeople get off the beaten track and make their way down these teeming avenues of information. Their destinations range from purely practical business to exotic esoterica.

We're talking about the remarkable phenomenon of the electronic bulletin board service. Anyone can dial into these BBSs, which range from organizations with dozens of incoming phone lines to one-line, mom-and-pop shops run as a hobby. The typical BBS offers shareware (software you try for free, then pay for if you use it); freeware (software you may use for free); graphics and text files available for downloading; message areas where you can talk about common interests; e-mail capabilities; and online newsletters and databases. BBSs have become so popular that they have their own monthly magazine, *Boardwatch* (800-933-6038), which highlights the latest online happenings and lists hundreds of BBSs. You can also dial into the magazine's own BBS (303-973-4222).

For a bulletin board of bulletin boards, check PC Contact on ZiffNet for BBS.ZIP; it's updated every two months. Once you become a BBS fanatic, you're sure to find hidden treasures of your own. Tell us in 50 words or fewer how your favorite saved you time and money or solved a business problem, and we'll publish the results in a future issue (see page 10 for contact information).

To get you started, we've provided a road map of some BBSs that we've found—both useful and unique. Some stock the raw fuel that's making the information age roar; others we offer just for fun. Also check out the etiquette tips on page 169.

So crank up your modem; set the communications parameters to no parity, eight data bits, one stop bit; and let's ride.

BY PRESTON GRALLA

THE ROAD: Use your communications software, modem, and passwords to get into a character-based world that's much smarter than it is beautiful. Write down your password—it's your driver's license.

WHEN IN ROME: Obnoxious flaming or SHOUTING is frowned upon. Hey, bozo—that's *:o) in BBSspeak—learn your emoticons. They're great shortcuts for communication.

KNOW YOUR SYSOP: That's short for system operator—the traffic cop who keeps communication civil and running smoothly. See page page 169 for more details.

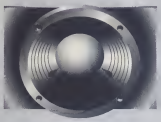
FedWorld

Users: Policy wonks and information junkies • (703) 321-8020 • Free • Reader Service No. 663

Believe it or not, the federal government has actually done something right: The almost unimaginable amount of data it compiles is available here electronically.

First, it's a straightforward BBS, a revealing window into the morass of federal data. Want the details on Clinton's health care plan, already indexed for a keyword search? How about abstracts describing government-approved patents?

Second, FedWorld is a gateway to more than 100 other government-agency bulletin boards. We're not just talking about bureaucratic minutiae—these boards provide important information on passports, travel alerts, toxic waste dumps, and economic trends. Use and enjoy FedWorld—after all, your tax dollars are paying for it.



SOFTWARE CREATIONS

Users: Game and shareware addicts • (508) 368-7036 • $45 per year • Reader Service No. 664

Software Creations was voted the best BBS in the country by readers of the online world's bible, *Boardwatch*. Why? It has become the primary distribution point for many game vendors. Also here: an astonishing collection of shareware, freeware, and graphics files for downloading—perhaps the most extensive we've seen. There are more than 150 discussion areas on the board culled from the Internet, including several covering shareware games.

Audiophile Network

Users: Audio, video, and stereo junkies • (818) 988-0452 • $24 per year • Reader Service No. 665

If you're as fanatical about audio equipment as you are about your computer, the Audiophile Network will be music to your ears. It's the place to go to talk about woofers, tweeters, and state-of-the-art audio equipment—and increasingly, about video hardware as well.

You can also order virtually any kind of audio gadget online. For used equipment, check the classified ads section or post a "component wanted" message. An online version of the Orion Audio bluebook helps determine fair prices for used equipment. Can you imagine the speaker systems that users of this BBS have wired to their PCs?

DATA GAMES DISCUSSION GROUPS

Windows Online

Users: Windows fiends and OS/2 cultists • (510) 736-8343 • $69.95 per year to $109.95 per year (depending on time connected and files downloaded) • Reader Service No. 666

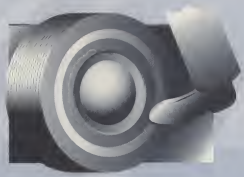
Are you a Windows nut? Then dial in to Windows Online's inconceivable cornucopia of Windows files. When we last checked, it had more than 12,000 files (almost 1.4GB of storage space) available for downloading. That doesn't include the files on Windows NT (22MB worth) and OS/2 (220MB worth).

For the lost, there are also help files from Microsoft and Compaq Computer, among others, to troubleshoot hardware and software problems. Other files are stuffed with technical tips. A great Windows shareware newsletter is available in Windows' Help format.

HouseNet

Users: Mr. and Ms. Fix-its • (410) 745-2037 • Free • Reader Service No. 667

Hit the nail on every household topic under the roof: how to weather-strip, install a roof vent, add a security door, make compost, seal an asphalt driveway, remove a slab of concrete, or hang wallpaper like a pro. Discussion groups target every room of your home. (But how do you tell your friends that you're part of a bathroom discussion group?) If the idea of knocking down walls, laying plaster, and running electrical wires makes your heart beat faster, here's where you'll find the proper tools.



INFOBOARD

Users: Bargain seekers and potential BBS designers • (617) 581-5287 • Free • Reader Service No. 668

Now here's a nifty new way to shop for software over the phone—not by voice, but over your modem. Once you've done your digital tire-kicking, ordering through InfoBoard nets you substantial discounts.

InfoBoard also includes a database of country inns and bed-and-breakfast lodgings in the Northeast. Some of them give you a 10 percent discount if you mention InfoBoard. Unfortunately, you can't make your reservations by e-mail.

If these two databases sound unrelated, they are. InfoBoard is run by a company that creates databases and front ends for other BBSs. The combined service is a prime example of the work they do. Interested in starting your own BBS? Talk to these folks first.

DATA GAMES DISCUSSION GROUPS

Greenpeace Environet

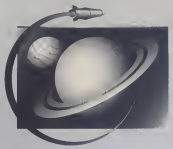
Users: Environmentalists and other activists • (415) 512-9120 • Free • Reader Service No. 669

If you worry about excessive timber logging in Thai forests, violations of nuclear waste agreements in Russia, or the lack of proper environmental scrubbers in Mexican coal-burning plants, then you'll want to check out the Greenpeace Environet. Run by the environmental watchdogs, it keeps you up to date on every environmental danger you've ever imagined—and some you haven't. Download environmental bulletins from around the world. Research alternate energy sources. If it's threatened, it's documented here.

DALLAS REMOTE IMAGING GROUP

Users: Astronomers and space lovers • (214) 394-7438 • $35 per year • Reader Service No. 670

If there's something you're interested in up there, you'll find information and someone to talk to about it down here. There are message areas devoted to space, NASA, and satellite tracking, as well as special bulletins on space-related news. It's almost like being able to dial in to the satellites themselves, because among this BBS's files, you'll find a mind-boggling number of astonishing photos taken from space. Download Landsat (land satellite) photos of Yellowstone National Park when it was ablaze in 1988, or photos taken from the space shuttle Discovery. This will rekindle your old sense of wonder about the heavens.



Know before You Go

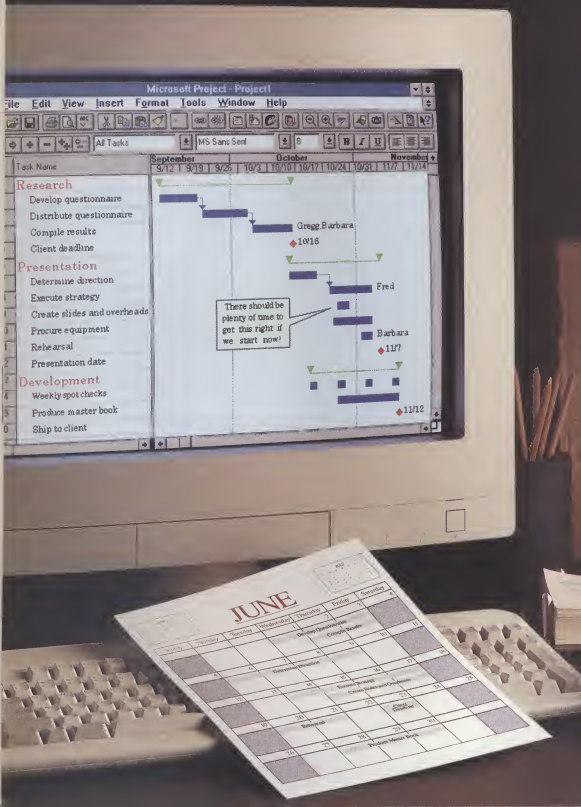
Before you roar down the fast lane of the Information Superhighway, learn the rules of the road. To begin with, the usual communications software settings are no parity, eight data bits, one stop bit.

Remember that bulletin boards are not pretty. As a rule, you navigate through them by choosing items from character-based menus. When you first log in, you'll be asked to type in your name. Next you'll be asked to enter a password. After you enter it, write it down somewhere; if you forget it, you won't be able to log in again without reregistering.

Once you're there, note the local customs. Typing in uppercase letters is the EQUIVALENT OF SHOUTING IN PUBLIC. Use emoticons—keyboard shortcuts you read sideways—to express your feelings in a faceless environment. The smiley face . . . :-) . . . is the most common. Use the winky . . . ;-) . . . to punctuate a joke. Use this . . . *:o) . . . if you think someone's a bozo. The more you travel, the more emoticons you'll discover.

Some folks abuse the ability to communicate somewhat anonymously online and so they flame—carry on in an obnoxious, offensive manner. Don't do it. Bulletin boards are run by people known as sysops (system operators). If you start flaming, they may ask you to knock it off in a private message. Ignore them, and you could lose your privileges.

THE CALENDAR HAS BEEN AROUND FOR 6,000 YEARS. WE FELT IT WAS TIME TO IMPROVE IT.



Introducing new Microsoft® Project version 4.0.

As long as people have had things to plan, they've always looked for better ways to organize and manage the process.

Now there's software that helps you do it more effectively than ever.

It helps you plan, manage and communicate with ease.

With new Microsoft Project, planning is easier than you ever imagined. Simply type a list of what's to be done. By whom. And how long they'll need.

Your plan is automatically converted to easy-to-read reports. Calendars. And charts. (Like the examples you can see at the left.)

It watches how you work and guides you step by step.

Like other programs in the Microsoft Office family, Microsoft Project features IntelliSense™ technology. Simply stated, your software now senses what you want to do and helps you do it.

For example, PlanningWizards offer suggestions as you go, to help you avoid problems down the line.

Cue Cards help you set up your plan with step-by-step instructions that stay on the screen as you work.

With GanttChartWizards, you just choose a great-looking format and it does the rest. (Just like the ChartWizard in Microsoft Excel.)

What's this all mean? Simply that you can get started right away. And learn as you go along.

Now it's easy to keep everyone in the loop.

Chances are you're not the only one working on the project. Microsoft Project was developed with this in mind.

You can now distribute reports through your existing electronic mail system*. Click on a button to collaborate. Click to delegate. Click to get the status of your plan. Even set reminders on important tasks.

To do all this (and a lot more) all you have to do is take the first step: Call Microsoft at (800) 671-3955, Dept. KZ5, for more information or for the name of a reseller near you.

You'll wonder how you ever managed without it.

The world's most popular business project planning software just got better with Microsoft Project version 4.0.

Microsoft

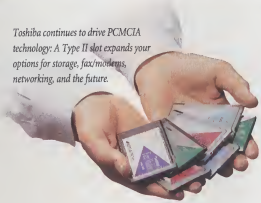
*Some workgroup features require MAPI compliant mail systems, acquired separately. © 1994 Microsoft Corporation. All rights reserved. Microsoft is a registered trademark and IntelliSense is a trademark of Microsoft Corporation. In the 50 United States, call (800) 671-3955, Dept. KZ5. Customers in Canada, call (800) 563-9048. Outside the 50 United States and Canada, call your local Microsoft subsidiary or (206) 936-8661.

Compact and lightweight — at just 4.4 lbs. The Portégé Series has been engineered to the extremes of portability without compromising usability.

DEFY THE LAWS OF SPACE AND TIME.

The new AccuPoint™ isometric pointing device works in conjunction with click and drag buttons located comfortably beneath the thumbs.

Toshiba continues to drive PCMCIA technology: A Type II slot expands your options for storage, fax/modems, networking, and the future.



INTRODUCING THE ULTRAPORTABLE PORTÉGÉ.

Never before have computers so perfectly balanced mass and speed. Now you can travel with a system smaller than a notebook—yet graced with the power and feel of a full-size computer. The ultraportable Portégé is driven by the full force of a high-performance i486™ processor, is equipped with a 250MB HDD and a high-endurance Lithium-Ion battery, and shines with Toshiba's renowned color active matrix display. There's even an optional Port Replicator for simple, single-point connection to your desktop environment. See how far we've taken every aspect of portable computing. Then, think where it can take you. **Call 1-800-457-7777 for your nearest dealer.**

PORTÉGÉ

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO GO.℠

Toshiba discovers the secret to longer life: The ultra-lightweight Li-Ion battery, with up to 6-hours of battery life, is the ultimate in power-per-ounce.

Generous 8.4" and 7.8" active matrix displays (on the T3600CT and T3400CT, respectively) deliver 256 SVGA colors.

intel inside

Portégé T3600CT
- 50MHz i486™DX2
- 8.4" dia. color TFT-LCD active matrix display—256 color SVGA
- 8MB RAM (expandable to 24MB)

Portégé T3400CT
- 33MHz SL Enhanced i486™SX
- 7.8" dia. color TFT-LCD active matrix display—256 color SVGA
- 4MB RAM (expandable to 20MB)

Both Models
- 250MB HDD
- Lithium-Ion battery
- Type II (5mm) PCMCIA slot
- 4.4 lbs.—7.9" x 9.9" x 1.8"
- VL local-bus video
- AccuPoint™ integrated pointing device
- Integrated BitBLT graphics accelerator
- Ports: serial, parallel, FDD, and VGA adapter
- Optional Port Replicator
- MS-DOS®, Microsoft Windows™ and CommWorks™ for Windows

3 YR LIMITED WARRANTY

In Touch with Tomorrow

TOSHIBA

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Circle 215 on reader service card.

Super Systems

SYNOPSIS

OUTLOOK: *How these Pentiums will run Windows 4.0.* **176**

TECHNOLOGY FORECAST: *Waiting for PowerPC is a gamble.* **177**

BEST OF BREED: *Polywell's Poly 586-90VL flies.* **177**

LAB NOTES: *Our tests show they run fast and cool.* **178**

A CLOSER LOOK: *Hands-on reviews of the first supersystems.* **180**

FINAL ANALYSIS: *Why Pentiums are the smartest upgrades around.* **203**

DECISION MAKER: *Choose the supersystem that best meets your business needs.* **203**

So much for simplicity. Time was, a system upgrade meant buying the fastest CPU Intel offered, paying polite attention to a few excellent *x*86 chip clones in the wings. No more. A menagerie of chips has come into play, and each promises double the performance of a 66MHz 486DX2, whether on today's 16-bit applications or on the 32-bit variety coming down the pike. Take our word for it: Computing will never be that simple again.

If you were willing to bet the farm on which 32-bit operating system is going to prevail in the coming months—as determined by the applications that flock to it—your choice would be easy. But most of us aren't so cavalier. We want safety *and* performance, today and tomorrow, regardless of the operating system we use.

This partly explains our attraction to the Pentium—the 90MHz version, in particular—for the price-to-performance ratio it offers. With multimedia creeping into word processors and spreadsheets, with 24-bit graphics taking over business reports, with voice annotation and video coming to e-mail, and with OLE 2.0 and animated help facilities coming to all applications, your need for more horsepower is only going to grow over the next few months. Count on it. While the Pentium doesn't provide true RISC performance—as Motorola's PowerPC and Digital Equipment Corp.'s Alpha do—it runs Windows NT and OS/2 like a dream. And there's every reason to believe that it will also run the forthcoming 32-bit version of Windows up to par as well. Microsoft is even reported to be working on a Pentium-specific version of Windows 4.0 (see "How They'll Run Windows 4.0," page 176).

Pentium isn't the only platform to consider, of course, but there's a very compelling reason to think about it: price. Prices on the 90MHz Pentium systems in this roundup start at just over $3,000. Each of these systems includes at least 16MB of RAM, half a gigabyte or more of storage, a video accelerator on local bus, and

BY MARTY JEROME

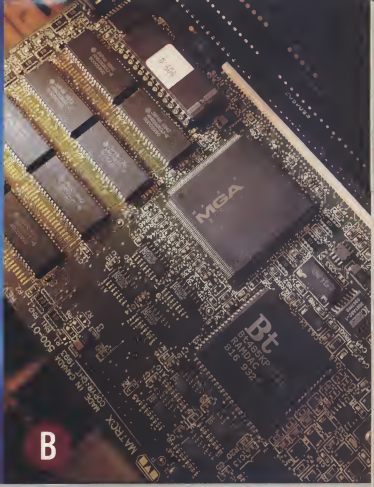
A STANDING TALL: Most 90MHz supersystems come in huge tower cases, leaving plenty of room for expansion.

B DETAILS: Speedy graphics cards and disk drives are key to top-notch Windows performance.

C THE TEMP: Worried about overheating? Chill out. These Pentiums run 10 to 35 degrees cooler than 66MHz 486DX2s.

D MULTIMEDIA MIGHT: 17-inch monitors, 16-bit sound, and CD-ROM drives are common options.

PHOTOGRAPHS BY STAN MUSILEK



RIP 486: Today's 90MHz Pentiums are a mightier, faster bridge to 32-bit computing.

Future Watch: Pentiums and Windows 4.0

a dual-speed CD-ROM drive—all the right pieces for today's business applications. Stock a 100MHz DX4 CPU with the same goodies, and the price difference between 486 and Pentium boxes is negligible. By December the difference is likely to vanish. What's the Pentium's advantage? A mightier, faster bridge to 32- and 64-bit computing.

Cold Warrior Price cuts on the Pentium CPU have come faster than anyone expected, thanks to the raging chip wars. Just months after introducing the clock-tripled 100MHz DX4 CPU, Intel quietly began shuffling it off to portables, hoping to bolster the Pentium's position as the new desktop standard. Now that concerns about overheating have evaporated (the systems we tested run cooler than clock-doubled 66MHz 486DX2s; see "Too Hot to Handle?" page 179), the Pentium faces a very bright future indeed.

Where are its rivals? The PowerPC awaits faster Windows emulation before it will pose a serious challenge (see "The PowerPC Gamble" page 177). Although Motorola's 100MHz PowerPC 604 chip, introduced in April, performs nearly 60 percent faster than a 100MHz Pentium in native processing tasks, it runs *x*86 applications at about the same speed as a 25MHz 486SX—and only in standard mode at that. Windows users will be disappointed.

Digital Equipment Corp. put all of its chips on Windows NT with its splendid but pricey Alpha machine. But as yet, mainstream software vendors aren't rushing to rewrite their applications for NT. DEC recently released its DECchip 21066, a cheaper, less powerful version of the 166MHz Alpha with PCI circuitry and a memory controller built right into the chip design. It performs on par with the Pentium and would be a fine alternative if NT ever becomes a mainstream product (not likely). Meanwhile, chip offerings from Cyrix, NexGen, Texas Instruments, and Advanced Micro Devices weren't even in fabrication as we went to press.

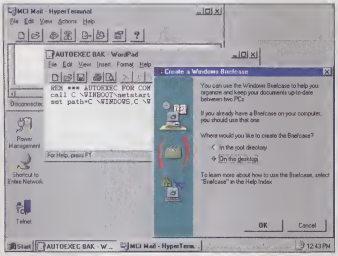
The Pentium's Payoff Does this mean that Pentium owns the future of 32- and 64-bit computing? For the foreseeable future, yes. As *PC Computing*'s lab tests confirm, the bang for the buck of Pentium systems now on the market is unbeatable. Zeos's Pantera 90—$3,195 in the configuration we tested—sailed past every other system in our component-level Windows performance tests (but dropped to seventh place in applications benchmarks, due to a slow hard drive). Polywell's Poly 586-90VL ($3,900) delivers roughly twice the performance of Compaq's 66MHz 486DX2-based ProLinea MT 4/66 CDS when running Windows applications. So do Gateway 2000's P5-90 ($3,999) and Sirius's SST P5-90VL ($4,200).

It's no surprise that half of the machines we tested come standard with 16-bit sound cards in addition to CD-ROM drives. Regardless of the operating system you use today, data types are growing richer in business applications and the reports, databases, project proposals, and other files you create with them. The systems we tested traffic this type of complex information at speeds that are unthinkable on 486-class PCs.

Pentium systems also ease growing pains. With high-bandwidth networking technologies like Fast Ethernet and asynchronous transfer mode (ATM) on the very near horizon, network managers have enough performance bottlenecks to worry about without lackadaisical clients tripping up the show. Contrary to popular belief, fast Pentiums reap more network performance gains as desktop systems than as servers (which rely heavily on fast I/O, high-speed disk drives, and acres of RAM cache instead of processor might).

Of course, every new generation of supersystems has promised better performance and longer investment protection. What distinguishes the machines in this roundup is that they also offer superb dollar value. If they convince you of anything at all, it's that you should never buy another 486 PC again.

OUTLOOK HOW THEY'LL RUN WINDOWS 4.0



Pentium-Ready? Chicago, a.k.a. the 32-bit version of Windows, isn't due to hit the streets until the beginning of next year, but sources tell us that Microsoft is quietly and feverishly at work on a version of Windows 4.0 optimized for the Pentium processor. (Microsoft officials would say only that the company is "looking at all kinds of options.") Though largely 32-bit, Windows 4.0 will still contain some 16-bit code brought over from Windows 3.*x*. A Pentium-optimized version of it would keep the performance penalty of this 16-bit code to a minimum. It could also boost the performance of preemptive multitasking, OLE 2.0, and other CPU-intensive operations. But will Microsoft bring the product to market? We should know by the end of the year.

Technology Forecast: The PowerPC Gamble

1. Apple's **PowerPC-based** Power Macintoshes run native applications as fast as 90MHz Pentiums.
2. Forthcoming PowerPC systems from IBM will outpace Pentiums—but only in **32-bit applications.**
3. For today's Windows business applications, the **90MHz Pentium** is still the best buy.

Rave about Pentium performance all you like, there's no substitute for true RISC computing. Just ask any software developer. Unfortunately, today's business applications must be recompiled to put a RISC chip's horsepower to work. And for most of us, business applications are where the rubber meets the road. There are already several fine RISC contenders to choose from. DEC's 166MHz 21064 Alpha chip and Mips Technologies' 150MHz R4400 both run Windows NT and provide far faster performance than the Pentium. Until more software vendors rewrite their applications for Windows NT, however, neither chip is expected to unseat the Pentium.

The RISC Advantage Not so for Motorola's PowerPC, a true RISC CPU that runs Apple's Macintosh operating system, as well as Windows. Muscle-bound backing for the chip from both IBM and Apple will likely persuade software vendors to recompile their applications to run in the CPU's native mode.

Power Macintosh Based on the 80MHz 601 version of the PowerPC chip, Apple's first Power Macintoshes are roughly as fast as 90MHz Pentiums when running native PowerPC applications (see "Life Begins at 100MHz," July 1994, page 118). Windows, on the other hand, runs only in 286 emulation through Insignia Solutions' SoftWindows, which means that it runs Windows in standard mode only. Translation: The Windows applications you use today will run faster on a no-frills 33MHz 486—never mind how fast they run on a 90MHz Pentium (which costs about the same as a Power Macintosh).

IBM's PowerPC Due later this year, IBM's PowerPC-based systems will use a version of the 100MHz 604 chip which runs nearly 60 percent faster than a 100MHz Pentium in native mode. Windows performance is helped, too, although even IBM officials concede that performance of 16-bit applications will be the equivalent of a 66MHz 486DX2. Meanwhile, Intel plans to upstage its 90MHz and 100MHz Pentiums in late 1995 with a next-generation chip code-named the P6, which will run at speeds of 150MHz or higher and be capable of 250 million instructions per second (mips)—roughly 60 percent faster than today's speediest Pentiums. At about the same time, Motorola will release its PowerPC 620 chip, which is expected to double the performance of the 604.

We'll Take Pentium So goes a never-ending game of leapfrog. Dollar for dollar, the Pentium offers the best performance you can buy for today's business applications. This may change when—and if—software vendors begin to recompile their applications for the PowerPC. But that's a high-stakes horse race that won't be played out for at least two years. For now, we'll place our bets on the Pentium.

PC Best

90MHz Pentium

Polywell Poly 586-90VL

PERFORMANCE: We've got a few nits to pick with the Poly 586-90VL, but no other system delivers as much performance for the dollar.

PRICE: Even those who've grown jaded to CPU power will do a fast double-take when they see what Polywell puts in a system that costs less than $4,000.

DESIGN: From its 64-bit graphics accelerator to its 4MB IDE caching controller, Polywell's Pentium is painstakingly engineered to put the pedal to the floor.

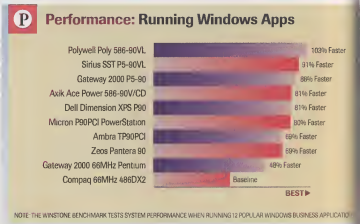
BOTTOM LINE: The Poly 586-90VL pushes today's 16-bit applications along at a breathless pace. Expect commensurate performance from 32-bit operating systems.

Poly 586-90VL / Polywell Computers / (800) 999-1278 / (415) 583-7222 / $3,900
Circle No. 686 on Reader Service Card

Lab Notes: What the Numbers Mean

How to Get **Ahead**

Our lab tests confirm it: The bang for the buck of 90MHz Pentiums is unbeatable. Polywell's $3,900 Poly 586-90VL delivers twice the performance of Compaq's 66MHz 486DX2-based ProLinea MT 4/66 CDS (which, incidentally, costs $4,199); so do Gateway 2000's $3,999 P5-90 and Sirius's $4,200 SST P5-90VL. Even comparatively slow Pentiums such as Ambra's $4,032 TP90PCI and Zeos's $3,195 Pantera 90 are nearly 70 percent faster than 486s. Likewise, 90MHz Pentiums are as much as 37 percent faster than 66MHz Pentium systems like Gateway 2000's $3,795 P5-66, yet cost only a few hundred dollars more.

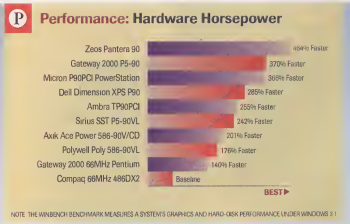


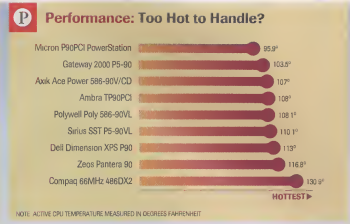
GUI Wizards: All of the 90MHz Pentiums we tested zipped through our test suite of Windows applications at breathtaking speeds, as much as 103 percent faster than a comparably configured 66MHz 486DX2. The 90MHz Pentiums from Polywell, Sirius, and Gateway 2000 led in overall applications performance.

The Inside Story on Speed

CD-ROM Drives, Sound Cards, and High-Resolution Graphics Cards Drive the Show

	Ambra TP90PCI	Axik Ace Power 586-90V/CD	Dell Dimension XPS P90
Price (Configuration Tested)	$4,032	$4,258	$4,199
CPU Cache	256K	512K	256K
Hard-Drive Capacity (Configuration Tested/Max.)	540MB/1GB	540MB/9GB	1GB/1GB
Hard-Drive Controller	PCI IDE	VL-Bus IDE, 4MB cache	PCI IDE
Local Bus	PCI	VL-Bus	PCI
Memory (Configuration Tested/Max.)	16MB/128MB	16MB/128MB	16MB/128MB
Graphics Card	Diamond Viper, 2MB VRAM	Diamond Viper, 2MB VRAM	Number Nine #9GXE64 Pro, 4MB VRAM
Monitor	FST Ambra (17-inch)	ADI Microscan 5A (15-inch)	Dell UltraScan 17ES (17-inch)
Sound Card	Media Vision Pro Audio Spectrum 16	Optional	Creative Labs Sound Blaster 16
CD-ROM Drive	Philips LMS-206 dual-speed	NEC CDR-510 triple-speed	Panasonic CR-563 dual-speed





Brute Force: Zeos's Pantera 90 muscled ahead in this component-level Winbench test, thanks to its spry Diamond Viper graphics card; however, a sleepy hard drive held it back in application tests. Gateway 2000's Pentium was more consistent; it raced ahead in both applications and component tests.

Just Right: Dare to touch a 90MHz Pentium chip while the system is running, and you'll burn your finger. Even so, with the Pentium's new 3.3-volt low-energy design and a generous use of heat sinks and fans, 90MHz Pentium systems run cooler than clock-doubled 66MHz 486DX2 machines.

Gateway 2000 P5-90	Micron P90PCI PowerStation	Polywell Poly 586-90VL	Sirius SST P5-90VL	Zeos Pantera 90
$3,999	$3,999	$3,900	$4,200	$3,195
256K	256K	512K	512K	256K
540MB/1.2GB	540MB/2GB	540MB/9GB	550MB/2GB	528MB/2GB
PCI Enhanced IDE	IDE	VL-Bus IDE, 4MB cache	VL-Bus IDE, 4MB cache	PCI IDE
PCI	PCI	VL-Bus	VL-Bus	PCI
16MB/128MB	16MB/192MB	16MB/128MB	16MB/128MB	16MB/192MB
Matrox MGA, 2MB VRAM	Matrox MGA, 2MB VRAM	Orchid Kelvin 64-VLB, 1MB DRAM	Weitek P9000, 2MB VRAM	Diamond Viper, 2MB VRAM
Gateway 2000 CrystalScan 1776LE (17-inch)	Mag InnoVision MX17F (17-inch)	Sampo (15-inch)	CTX 1760 (17-inch)	Zeos (15-inch)
Gateway 2000 Sound Galaxy Pro	Optional	MediaMagic 16	Optional	Optional
NEC CDR-510 triple-speed	Mitsumi FX-001D dual-speed	Philips OEM-205 dual-speed	Mitsumi FX-001D dual-speed	Mitsumi FX-001D dual-speed

90MHz Pentium: Ambra TP90PCI

Slow Song

USABILITY: *Plug-and-play multimedia.*
PERFORMANCE: *Slower than other systems in its class.*
TECHNOLOGY: *Faster video would help.*
VERDICT: *Not a bad package in its basic configuration.*

FILEBOX

Ambra TP90PCI

Pros: Dual-speed CD-ROM drive, 16-bit sound, and a bright 17-inch display.

Cons: Slow (and pricey) for its class.

Suitability: Not the fastest Pentium. The $2,739 basic model is a better buy.

$4,032
Ambra Computer
(800) 252-6272
Reader Service No. 675

Ambra Computer waits for no one—including its parent company, IBM. The TP90PCI minitower (the system also comes in a desktop case) beat IBM's own 90MHz ValuePoint Pentium to market, and comes fully stocked and multimedia ready.

Loaded The TP90PCI's $4,032 price might seem steep for a system in this class, but that owes largely to its spacious 17-inch monitor. A more basic desktop configuration comes with 8MB of memory and a 15-inch monitor, and costs a very affordable $2,739.

In either configuration, however, performance was disappointing, and this surprised us. All of the pieces for show-stopping speed are in place: 256K level-2 write-back cache, a video accelerator with 2MB of VRAM, and Western Digital's 540MB Caviar 2540 IDE hard drive running on local bus.

But Ambra's TP90PCI tied with Zeos's Pantera 90 for last place in applications performance tests. Both machines would benefit from a larger level-2 cache and a 64-bit video accelerator. Even so, the TP90PCI is nearly 70 percent faster than Compaq's 66MHz 486DX2-based ProLinea MT 4/66 CDS. It won't leave you drumming your fingers while you wait for a spreadsheet to recalculate.

Dance and Sing The TP90PCI is loaded for multimedia. Philips' dual-speed multisession CD-ROM drive is standard, as is Media Vision's 16-bit, dual-channel Pro Audio Spectrum 16 sound card. Speakers are included, and there's plenty of room for expansion: six drive bays, as well as four ISA slots, two PCI slots, and one PCI/ISA combination slot. On the software side, the TP90PCI includes only the basics: DOS 6.2 and Windows 3.1.

The system RAM is expandable to 128MB, but make sure you buy your machine stocked with as much memory as you plan to use. Adding RAM requires removing the hard drive, and the case is supported by a single plastic cross beam that threatens to break when you remove it. Ambra also offers a 1GB hard-drive option, and the CPU is upgradable. At $2,739 for the basic configuration, it's a good price for a multimedia Pentium, but we'll take the comparably configured $3,195 Pantera 90 from Zeos instead.

Performance: Windows Apps

Tick, Tick, Tick: Despite average performance in carrying out processor- and graphics-intensive tasks, Ambra's TP90PCI tied with Zeos's Pantera 90 for last place when running our suite of Windows business applications.

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Circle 122 on reader service card.

90MHz Pentium: Axik Ace Power 586-90V/CD

Windows **Ace?**

USABILITY: *Roomy tower case.*
PERFORMANCE: *Squarely middle-of-the-road.*
TECHNOLOGY: *A VESA local-bus holdout.*
VERDICT: *Pricey for its performance and configuration.*

FILEBOX

Ace Power 586-90V/CD

Pros: Superb hard-disk performance, lots of room for expansion.

Cons: For the price, a 17-inch display and sound card should be included.

Suitability: Well-crafted (albeit expensive) Windows machine.

$4,258
Axik Computer
(800) 234-2945, (408) 735-1234
Reader Service No. 676

Don't kiss VL-Bus good-bye just yet. While PCI local bus is quickly taking over the Pentium platform, Axik's Ace Power 586-90V/CD proves that there's plenty of life left in VESA's technology. The $4,258 tower we reviewed held its own against Micron's P90PCI PowerStation and Dell's Dimension XPS P90—both of which use the newer PCI standard.

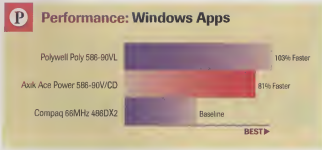
Hedged Bet The engineers at Axik took no chances where performance was concerned. The system comes with a full 512K write-back cache as well as Promise Technology's DC-4030VL local-bus hard-drive caching controller and 4MB of cache for the 540MB Maxtor MXT-540R drive. The Ace Power 586-90V/CD also features the VESA version of the Diamond Viper video accelerator with 2MB VRAM.

The results? Solid midlevel performance that will neither dazzle nor disappoint. It nosed ahead of Micron's P90PCI PowerStation in our Windows applications tests and delivered virtually the same performance as Dell's Dimension XPS P90. On the other hand, drive performance was very hot—nearly as fast as Sirius's SST P5-90VL and Polywell's Poly 586-90VL, both of which also have the advantage of well-stocked caching controllers.

Room to Move The Ace Power 586-90V/CD's tower case provides more than ample upgrade space. There are nine drive bays in all. The CPU is cooled by a heat sink with a fan mounted unobtrusively on top, allowing plenty of room to work when going under the hood. Five ISA and three VESA local bus slots are all within easy reach. Memory is expandable to 128MB using 2MB, 4MB, 8MB, 16MB, 32MB, or 64MB SIMMs, which leaves two of the four sockets free. One gigabyte of storage not enough? No worries. The hard drive is upgradable to 9GB. And like other Pentium systems in this roundup, the CPU is upgradable, too.

We liked the triple-speed CD-ROM drive, which has volume controls and a headphone jack on the front and a SCSI port on the back. There was no sound card in the system we tested, but Axik will throw in a Sound Blaster 16 SCSI-2 with ASP for $200. While they're at it, we wouldn't mind a desktop model of this system configured like our tower unit . . . for the same price.

Performance: Windows Apps



Don't Blink: Almost twice as fast as a basic 66MHz 486DX2, the Ace Power 586-90V/CD performed on par with Dell's Dimension XPS P90—thanks to its VESA local-bus caching controller with 4MB of onboard RAM.

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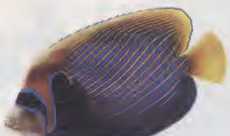

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PC MAGAZINE UK EDITORS' CHOICE

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August 1993
APC Back UPS 1250

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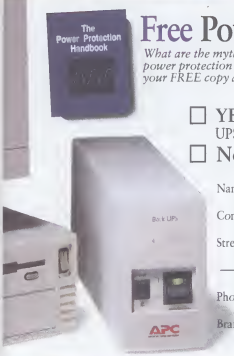

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PC MAGAZINE UK EDITORS' CHOICE

August 1993
APC Back UPS 1250

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$25,000

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"All other brands of UPS die regularly in this lightning prone environment. My APC won't die!" said Paul Sisilli, Systems Analyst, City of Port St. Lucie. "With other brands, users don't find out until it is too late. The power interruptions here are very hard to live with. The other brands are dying off. Typically they last just beyond their warranty period. My Back-UPS is going on three years...no other brand is as reliable."

Don Traux knows first hand about Back-UPS reliability: "It ought to be against the law to buy a computer without an APC Back-UPS 250. I recently had a direct lightning hit right outside the house...my computer never blinked. Each morning I get a surge down the line and both APC's hate it - they simultaneously 'holler 'n clamp' while my 'Brand T' quietly sleeps in. I've relegated that unit to non-critical household stuff like my VCR."

Andrew Wargo, Manager at Baxter Land Company, tried two other brands before Back-UPS. "One lasted a few days, a second one went up in smoke after 48 hours, a third lasted less than 24 hours! I then bought my Back-UPS for less than half of what I had paid for the others. We've purchased three more Back-UPS and for the past 14 months they've been just hummin' away on the same power line that was eating the other brands alive!"

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600	Heavily configured systems, CAD/CAM workstations	$399
900	Multiple systems, longer runtime applications	$599
1250	Multiple systems, LAN hubs, small minis, telecom equipment	$799

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Circle 116 on reader service card.

Dept. E7

90MHz Pentium: Dell Dimension XPS P90

Rock Solid

USABILITY: *Excellent attention to detail.*
PERFORMANCE: *Respectable, but not the fastest.*
TECHNOLOGY: *Massive 1GB hard drive.*
VERDICT: *A first-rate multimedia business workhorse.*

FILEBOX

Dimension XPS P90

Pros: Winning feature set and design. Dell's support is superb.

Cons: It's fast, but other Pentiums are faster.

Suitability: The ideal multimedia business system for today's and tomorrow's applications.

$4,199
Dell Computer
(800) 613-3355, (512) 338-4400
Reader Service No. 677

Dell's got a surprise for you. Its $4,199 desktop Dimension XPS P90 may seem expensive at first glance, but peek beneath the hood and you'll find a shrewd and feature-laden configuration that's well worth the cost. Let us put it another way: Dell's 90MHz Pentium offers high dollar value.

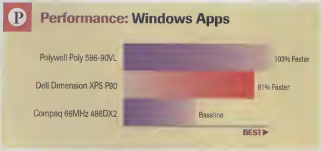
Winning Formula Begin with 16MB of RAM, expandable to 128MB, then add a 1GB Conners IDE hard drive (almost twice the storage space of the other systems tested) running on PCI local bus and a 256K write-back level-2 CPU cache. This machine features a zippy 64-bit Number Nine #9GXE64 Pro video card stocked with 4MB VRAM that also runs on local bus, not to mention Panasonic's CR-563 dual-speed multisession CD-ROM drive, a Sound Blaster 16 sound card, speakers, and a 17-inch monitor.

All this adds up to a serious multimedia business machine, even if its performance isn't as fast as Polywell's Poly 586-90VL. The Dimension XPS P90 tied Axik's Ace Power 586-90V/CD for fourth place in our Windows applications benchmarks, just behind Gateway 2000's P5-90 and more or less on par with Micron's P90PCI PowerStation. A larger level-2 cache would boost performance slightly. However, hard-drive performance was superb, even without a caching controller (the systems from Axik, Polywell, and Sirius all include one).

How You Like 'Em In case it isn't obvious, we like the Dimension XPS P90. Performance is well above average, and the configuration is suited to the Pentium—especially the 1GB of hard-drive real estate. On the software side, PhotoStyler CD, Sound Effects Library, and Multimedia Sound Studio CD come bundled with the machine. They're titles you'd expect from a budget-line PC, but they're worth having.

The Dimension XPS P90 has enough muscle and upgradability for any office. Four ISA slots, two PCI slots, and one ISA/PCI slot provide plenty of room for expansion in the machine's midsized case. When we reviewed it in our July issue (see "Life Begins at 100MHz," page 118), the Dimension XPS P90 was the fastest PC to cross our test bench. It's no longer the fastest, but it's still one of the best.

Performance: Windows Apps



Better Than the Average Bear: It's not the fastest gun in the West, but the Dimension XPS P90's performance ranks above average for a Pentium, even with a small 256K write-back level-2 cache and no caching controller.

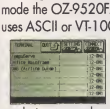
THE NEW WIZARD OZ-9520FX.

(IT WOULD BE EASIER TO TELL YOU WHAT IT DOESN'T DO)

It's the latest addition to the #1 selling line of personal information organizers. It features a pen-based graphical user interface, 512K of

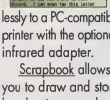
memory and all the tools you could ever want in a 10.5 ounce package. And the new "ultra-compact fax modem" only adds 1.27 ounces and requires no additional cables or setup for use. Best of all, it can remain attached to the Wizard and still fit in a pocket or purse.

The unit's built-in fax software permits users to send a drawing, a letter, or even an entire folder of documents. The software also provides

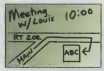


emulation to send and receive electronic mail and connect to on-line services like CompuServe®.

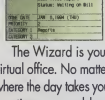
A word processor with cut, paste, and a variety of text styles enables you to produce professional-looking letters. Completed documents can then be beamed to a colleague's Wizard or output wirelessly to a PC-compatible printer with the optional infrared adapter.



Scrapbook allows you to draw and store hand-written words or maps and diagrams directly on the screen using the Wizard's stylus or your finger. Images can also be imported from a PC or Mac® into Scrapbook enabling telephone entries, for example, to have portraits or maps attached to them. A unique Filer system–of graphically represented folders–groups related information together by subject, making it ideal for project management.



And when it comes to time management, Wizard sets the standard. Four different calendar views, 3 phone directories, a To Do list, and there's even a function that allows you to enter annual events, like birthdays and anniversaries, so you'll never miss a moment.



The Wizard is your virtual office. No matter where the day takes you, creating a spreadsheet is as easy as inserting the optional PenCell® spreadsheet card.

Using Computer Link software, data can be transferred to and from a PC or Mac®. And the optional wireless adapter enables Wizard's infrared technology to make this transfer effortless.

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90MHz Pentium: Gateway 2000 P5-90

Spry **Giant**

USABILITY: *Acres of room for expansion.*
PERFORMANCE: *Third overall.*
TECHNOLOGY: *The fastest PCI-based machine tested.*
VERDICT: *Lots of supersystem for just under $4,000.*

FILEBOX

Gateway 2000 P5-90

Pros: All the right pieces for big multimedia.

Cons: Massive tower case is likely to be too big for many offices.

Suitability: All-around multimedia bargain with great options and software to boot.

$3,999
Gateway 2000
(800) 846-2000, (605) 232-2000
Reader Service No. 678

Make no mistake: Gateway 2000's $3,999 P5-90 is *big*. A giant tower that slopes gently outward near the floor for greater stability, it absolutely looks like an engine of office power.

Indeed, it is. We'd change very little on its standard configuration, which includes 16MB of RAM (expandable to 128MB), Western Digital's 540MB Enhanced IDE Caviar 2540 hard drive running on PCI local bus (Gateway also offers a 1.2GB option), and a 64-bit Matrox MGA graphics accelerator with 2MB of VRAM running on local bus and capable of 1,280-by-1,024-pixel resolutions. The machine also features NEC's snazzy triple-speed CDR-510 multisession CD-ROM drive, a 16-bit sound card, a pair of Yamaha speakers, a 17-inch monitor, and an enviable software bundle. Did we leave anything out?

Take Charge Perhaps if Gateway had bumped the standard 256K cache to 512K, or added a caching controller, it would have made the P5-90 the performance leader in this roundup. As it is, the system trailed only Polywell's Poly 586-90VL and Sirius's SST P5-90VL, both of which come with well-stocked caching controllers for their IDE drives (each includes 4MB of cache memory). Still, no one can call the P5-90's performance shabby.

At roughly $100 more than the Poly 586-90VL, it performs only slightly slower and comes equipped with a nearly identical feature set. What's the catch? The P5-90 sports a 17-inch CrystalScan monitor (the Poly 586-90VL's monitor is 15 inches)—well worth the extra cost. But why pair multimedia capability and a high-resolution monitor with a box designed for servers? No matter. There are four ISA slots, two PCI slots, and one ISA/PCI slot. And yes, there are eight drive bays, should you need them.

And Software, Too Give Gateway 2000 bonus points for including Windows for Workgroups 3.11, which actually runs faster than vanilla Windows. Microsoft Office Professional is also part of Gateway 2000's latest bundle, and the company's three-year warranty and toll-free support are part of the bargain. The P5-90 is clearly a winner—if you can find a space big enough to stash the monster.

Performance: Windows Apps

Fly PCI: Gateway 2000's P5-90 ranked third overall in Windows applications benchmarks—a bigger level-2 cache and a caching controller might have pushed it ahead of the leaders. Never mind. You won't be disappointed.

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MICE **KEYBOARDS** **FLOPPY DISK DRIVES** **CD-ROM DRIVES**

90MHz Pentium: Micron P90PCI PowerStation

Sweet **Bargain**

USABILITY: *Easy-off case design makes upgrades a snap.*
PERFORMANCE: *About average for a machine in this class.*
TECHNOLOGY: *Speedy 64-bit graphics.*
VERDICT: *Would that it were a little faster.*

FILEBOX

P90PCI PowerStation

Pros: Outfitted to the nines for the most demanding business applications.

Cons: Only average performance.

Suitability: The business upgrade to get when the purse strings are tight.

$3,999
Micron Computer
(800) 515-9197, (208) 465-3434
Reader Service No. 679

Should you ever do a double take on an ad for a 90MHz Pentium system priced at an eye-popping $2,999, it might very well be Micron's. The company has forged its reputation on high-performance systems that undercut even the lowest budget beaters. The $3,999 P90PCI PowerStation we tested came fully dressed for business, yet costs well below virtually all of the other machines in this roundup.

Chutzpah Like the Pantera 90 from Zeos, the P90PCI PowerStation's performance soared in *PC Computing*'s Winbench component-level tests and turned in only mediocre results in Windows applications benchmarks, which more realistically reflect the performance you can expect. On these latter tests, it performed on par with Dell's Dimension XPS P90 and Axik's Ace Power 586-90V/CD, besting the Pantera 90 and Ambra's TP90PCI.

Outfitted with a 256K write-back cache, 16MB RAM (expandable to 192MB!), Conners' 540MB CFA540 IDE hard drive, and Matrox's excellent 64-bit MGA card with 2MB of VRAM, the PowerStation comes with all the iron of machines that sell for $1,500 more. There was no sound card on the unit we received, but you'll find Mitsumi's dual-speed multisession CD-ROM drive and a 17-inch monitor.

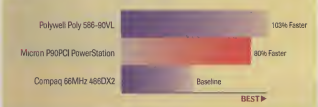
Easy Off A single oversized finger screw on the back of the desktop case releases it from the chassis—a design that makes going under the hood a snap. Slip off the case, and inside you'll find eight slots, three of which are for PCI peripherals.

The CPU uses a heat sink and its own fan, as well as the fan from the power supply. But like all the systems in our roundup, overheating is no longer a problem thanks to the 3.3-volt version of the Pentium (see "Too Hot to Handle?" page 179).

Micron's software bundle for the PowerStation is impressive. Along with Windows for Workgroups 3.11, it comes with Microsoft Office 4.2. Toll-free support and a one-year warranty are also standard.

When you're making the case for a 90MHz Pentium, first show your office manager all of the features that come with the P90PCI PowerStation. If he or she says no, mention the price. That should cinch it.

Performance: Windows Apps



Giddyap: You won't call it slow, even though performance under Windows applications could be better for a 90MHz Pentium. We recommend the optional 512K CPU cache and SCSI caching controller for an extra performance boost.

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Uncle Seymour got you your first job.

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90MHz Pentium: Polywell Poly 586-90VL

Barn **Burner**

USABILITY: *Lots of expansion—and then some.*
PERFORMANCE: *Wow!*
TECHNOLOGY: *Snappy VESA local-bus disk and video.*
VERDICT: *Our favorite. The fastest 90MHz Pentium we tested.*

FILEBOX

Poly 586-90VL

Pros: It's fast—mighty fast—when running Windows applications.

Cons: Skip the 15-inch monitor and spring for a 17-incher instead.

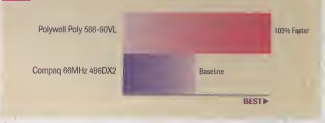
Suitability: Spurs Windows application performance like no other Pentium system.

$3,900
Polywell Computers
(800) 999-1278, (415) 583-7222
Reader Service No. 680

Think PCI owns Pentiums? Think again. Polywell Computers' Poly 586-90VL—a VESA machine—screamed past every PCI Pentium in our roundup when running Windows applications. And not just by a small margin, we might add; it's the fastest 90MHz Pentium we've seen to date.

Stoked VL-Bus isn't the only unusual feature on this $3,900 Polywell system. For example, the unit we tested came with an IDE caching controller running on local bus with 4MB of RAM. On the other hand, the video card, a 64-bit Orchid Kelvin 64-VLB, comes with only 1MB of slow DRAM, not dual-ported VRAM. All of the other systems we tested came with 2MB or more of speedy VRAM.

Performance: Windows Apps



Smokin': Polywell's Poly 586-90VL was 103 percent faster than Compaq's 66MHz ProLinea MT 4/66 486DX2 when running popular Windows business applications—and easily outran every other Pentium we tested. Need we say more?

Slow video usually hamstrings system performance far more than slow disk transfers. Sure enough, in our Winbench test (which measures raw Windows muscle), the Poly 586-90VL turned out to be the slowest of the 90MHz Pentiums we tested. But hand it a slew of business applications and stand back. No doubt the machine's 512K write-back level-2 cache helps somewhat, as do fast disk accesses on Western Digital's 540MB Caviar 2540 hard drive. Still, its performance in applications tests should give pause to those who believe that PCI local bus owns the future of Pentium.

Stocked The Poly 586-90VL comes with a Media-Magic 16 sound card and a dual-speed multisession CD-ROM drive (which, to our disappointment, uses a proprietary rather than a SCSI interface). There are five ISA and three VL slots, but the hard-drive controller, CD adapter, sound card, video, and even I/O take up slots. Of the eight, you're left with one VL and three ISA slots. But there's plenty of room for extra drives (up to 9GB worth) in the squat, handsome mini-tower. In addition to Windows 3.11 and MS-DOS 6.2, Micron throws in an eclectic handful of CD multimedia titles with its system, including Robocop 3D.

We'd happily pay a bit more for a 17-inch monitor (the price of our unit includes only a 15-inch model), and we'd like to see Polywell move the communications ports to the motherboard in future versions of the machine. Still, for spurring the applications you use today, this is the machine to get.

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It can happen anywhere: at home, in your hotel room, an airport lounge, while you're overseas. Suddenly you've got to get at a file, access e-mail—maybe even run a program—that's in the PC back at your office.

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BRAVO LC *Intel DX4/100,486DX2/66, 486SX2/50, 486SX/33, 4 ISA slots including 1VL slot, 5 drive bays, Pentium OverDrive upgradable.* **BRAVO LP** *Intel 486DX2/66, 486SX2/50, 486SX/33, 2 ISA slots, 3 drive bays, Pentium OverDrive upgradable.*

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BRAVO MT *Intel Pentium 60MHz, 486DX2/66, 486SX2/50, 486SX/33, 6 ISA slots, 6 drive bays, FlashBIOS. Pentium 60MHz includes 5 ISA and 2 VL slots.*

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90MHz Pentium: Sirius SST P5-90VL

High Flyer

USABILITY: *Compact minitower case.*
PERFORMANCE: *Second only to the Poly 586-90VL.*
TECHNOLOGY: *Another VL-Bus holdout.*
VERDICT: *Stacks up admirably against other Pentiums.*

FILEBOX

SST P5-90VL

Pros: Price includes a 17-inch monitor and blistering performance.

Cons: Graphics performance couldn't match the Poly 586-90VL.

Suitability: A close competitor to our top pick, Polywell's Poly 586-90VL.

$4,200
Sirius Systems Technology
(800) 424-0724, (713) 946-0724
Reader Service No. 681

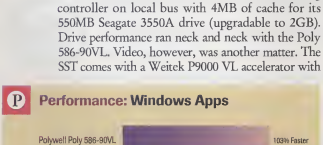
Not only was the fastest system we tested, Polywell's Poly 586-90VL, based on VL-Bus, so was the second fastest, Sirius Systems Technology's $4,200 SST P5-90VL. In many ways, the two systems are remarkably similar. As we discovered with SST's system, however, the devil is in the details.

Sweet Spot Like the Poly 586-90VL, the SST P5-90VL uses an Opti chipset and comes with 512K of write-back level-2 cache. It also uses an IDE caching controller on local bus with 4MB of cache for its 550MB Seagate 3550A drive (upgradable to 2GB). Drive performance ran neck and neck with the Poly 586-90VL. Video, however, was another matter. The SST comes with a Weitek P9000 VL accelerator with 2MB of VRAM. Despite the machine's stunning overall performance when compared with the other systems in our roundup, video performance couldn't keep up with that of Polywell's Pentium.

Unique to the SST P5-90VL is its liquid cooling system for the CPU. Flourinert, a liquid with a very low boiling point, circulates through a plastic case that sits on top of the chip. The CPU heats the liquid to boiling, which opens a valve through which the Flourinert passes to a condenser located away from the CPU. It cools, returning to liquid form, then trickles back to the CPU. As crafty as this sounds, the model we tested with liquid cooling actually ran an average of 15 percent hotter than the other systems in this roundup. Sirius also sells a unit with a CPU fan, which we recommend instead; the fan-cooled unit we tested ran cooler than the liquid-cooled model.

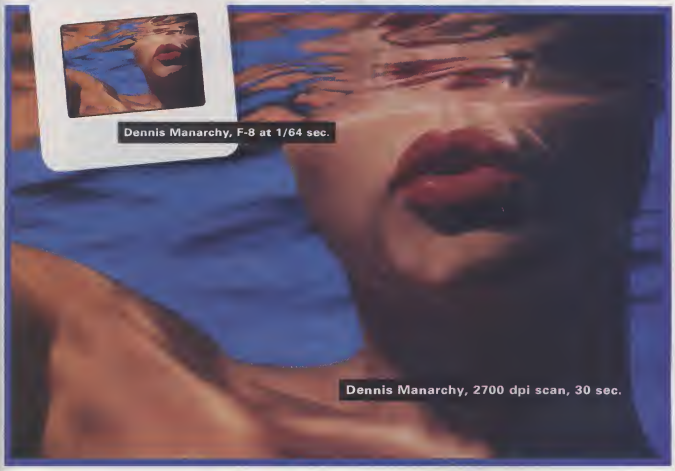
Toe-to-Toe Given the machine's blazing performance and rich feature set—which includes a dual-speed CD-ROM drive, five ISA and three VESA local-bus slots, and a 17-inch monitor—the SST lines up pretty evenly with the Poly. The model we tested didn't include a sound card, though Sirius will sell you either a 16-bit Media Vision Pro Audio Spectrum 16 or Sound Blaster 16 for a mere $100 extra.

Which system would we choose? We like the SST P5-90VL's 17-inch monitor. But in the end, we'll take Polywell's Poly 586-90VL for its performance edge and smaller price tag.



Greased Lightning: Performance on the SST P5-90VL lagged slightly behind Polywell's Poly 586-90VL, its near-twin. Both machines sweep the lot, thanks to well-stocked hard-drive caching controllers and fast VL-Bus video.

The only thing missing is the wait.



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Cons: Sluggish IDE hard-drive performance slows Windows applications.

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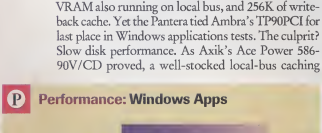
What happened with Zeos's amazing Pantera 90? One glance at the machine's Winbench hardware scores and we expected it to dust every other system in our roundup. But when we put it to work on Windows business applications, it pulled up the rear.

Flip-Flop All of the pieces for top-deck performance are in place: a 528MB IDE Seagate ST3655A hard drive (upgradable to 2GB) running on PCI local bus, a Diamond Viper graphics card with 2MB of VRAM also running on local bus, and 256K of write-back cache. Yet the Pantera tied Ambra's TP90PCI for last place in Windows applications tests. The culprit? Slow disk performance. As Axik's Ace Power 586-90V/CD proved, a well-stocked local-bus caching controller is no panacea. The Pantera 90's drive performance could use a boost.

It bears mentioning that after testing the Pantera 90, we learned that future versions of the system will include Seagate's faster 528MB ST3660A hard drive and Diamond's brawnier 64-bit Stealth 64 graphics card. This combination could well bring the Pantera 90's performance up to par.

Still, the Pantera 90's sluggish performance seems a trifle when you consider its price: $3,195 fully outfitted. That includes the same dual-speed CD-ROM drive used by Sirius's SST P5-90VL and Micron's P90PCI PowerStation. There was no sound card in our system, and the monitor is only a 15-inch display, but let's not protest. The Pantera costs $1,477 less than Ambra's TP90PCI and performs far better. And for a little more than half the difference, you can buy a 17-inch monitor and sound card of your own choosing.

Tower of Power Use the Pantera 90 as the server it was meant to be. Its giant tower comes with ten—count 'em, *ten*—drive bays. There are five ISA and three PCI slots. Besides Windows for Workgroups 3.11, you have your choice of one Lotus application: 1-2-3 for Windows, Ami Pro, Freelance Graphics, Improv, Approach, or Organizer. Take a tip: Swap the IDE hard drive for a well-cached SCSI drive array, bump the CPU cache up to the optional 512K, and let your network fly. Meanwhile, we can't wait for a more compact desktop model.



Pentium Prowler: The Pantera 90's performance on Windows applications tests was disappointing for a 90MHz Pentium, owing to slow IDE drive performance. Future models should include a faster graphics card and hard disk.

The **Smartest** Upgrade

Strange as it may sound, the 90MHz Pentium is likely to be one of the cheapest upgrade paths you'll find. It brings enough muscle to the show to ensure that tomorrow's 32-bit operating systems will hum along unfettered. This means you won't be shopping for yet another system two years from now. It costs less than the 100MHz Pentium, which currently commands a premium as Intel's performance leader. And besieged by competing chips, its price has been slashed deeper—and faster—than any Intel CPU since the PC was invented. Our tests answered these questions as well:

Why upgrade to a Pentium system instead of a 100MHz DX4? Shop around. We think you'll soon find the price difference between the two chips negligible. The power difference, however, is not. Likewise, 60MHz and 66MHz Pentiums are priced in the same ballpark as DX4s. Regardless of the fortunes of 32-bit software such as Chicago and Windows NT, operating systems and applications are already demanding more horsepower than ever. The DX4 will run out of gas far sooner than the Pentium.

What are the key issues for fast Pentium performance? As our tests prove, a fast hard-drive subsystem is key to fast Windows applications performance. The systems that performed best came with caching controllers. Fast video is also important; look for a 64-bit local-bus graphics accelerator.

As for which flavor of local bus to get, PCI is the most common: Five of the systems we tested use it, while three rely on the older VL-Bus standard. Even so, the two fastest systems, the Poly 586-90VL and the SST P5-90VL, rely on VL-Bus.

Is overheating a concern? Decidedly not. Thanks to the 90MHz Pentium's low-energy, low-heat 3.3-volt design, it runs cooler than 66MHz clock-doubled CPUs like Intel's 486DX2.

What about the PowerPC? Splendid chip that it is, the PowerPC runs today's Windows applications at about half the speed of a 90MHz Pentium. Will your favorite software vendors eventually port their applications to the PowerPC? Probably, but it's anyone's guess as to when. That's a very risky gamble.

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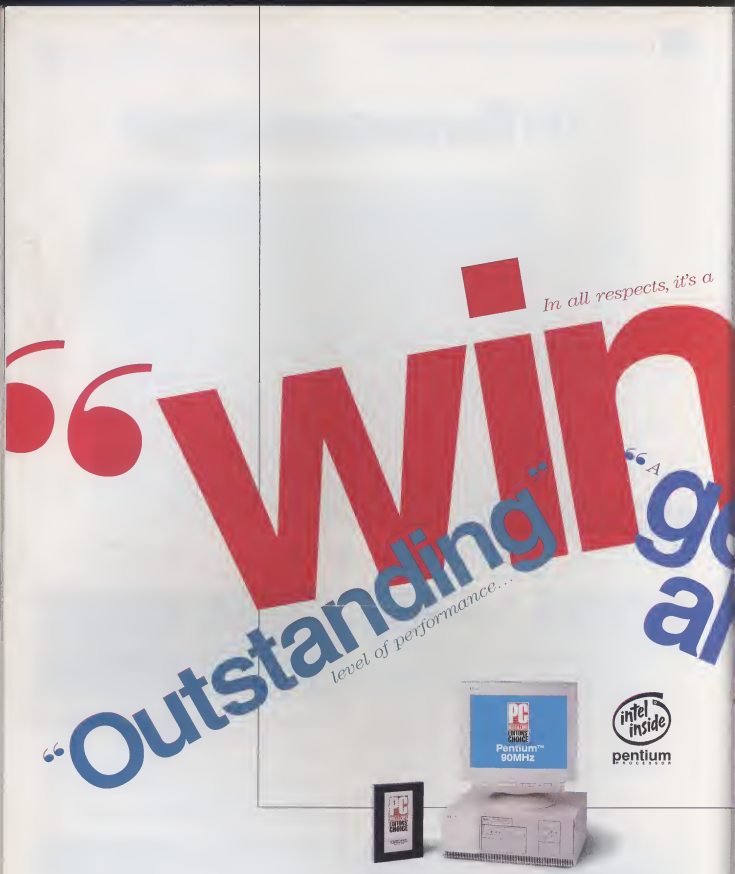
	Service & Support	Mechanical Design	Micron P90PCI
		Performance	Polywell Poly 586-90VL
Performance	Price	Bundled Software	Gateway 2000 P5-90
		Service & Support	Polywell Poly 586-90VL
	Mechanical Design	Service & Support	Sirius SST P5-90VL
		Bundled Software	Gateway 2000 P5-90
Service & Support	Price	Mechanical Design	Polywell Poly 586-90VL
		Performance	Polywell Poly 586-90VL
	Performance	Mechanical Design	Polywell Poly 586-90VL
		Price	Polywell Poly 586-90VL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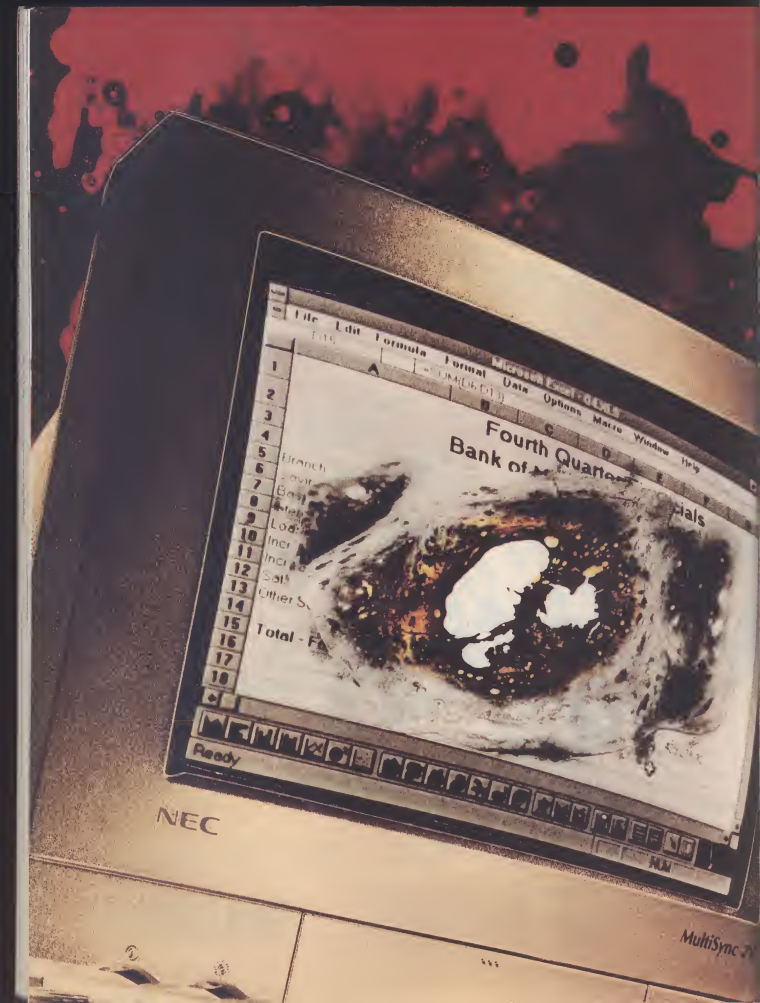
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Virus, They Wrote

They lurk in the dark alleys off the Infobahn, these perps who live to hit and run. They do their dirty work, jump the curb, and disappear from the scene of the digital grime. They're virogens, the writers of perverted little programs that seduce data and corrupt programs on your computer. In many ways these virogens are as remorseless as the evil software they create, with no compassion for their victims, whether human or hardware.

Like a jack-in-the-box, the virus writer will hide in the dark and wait until someone turns the handle. Then pop!, there he is, a harlequin with an evil grin, unexpected, unwelcome, unforgiving, vomiting bits of code and staining everything in sight. An ugly picture.

These technotaggers are your worst enemies. They're random beyond reason. They don't care how much cache you have on you. They don't hear when your processor screams.

They don't twitch if your company's financial data rots just because you recalculated some spreadsheets at home one night, and it turned out that your kid had just played some games from a friend's disk on your PC. The virus slinked from your home PC hard disk back to the hard disk on your PC at work. And suddenly it's over the network and you're over at the unemployment office.

Virogens don't need passports because they don't respect borders. They don't use names, just aliases—monikers like Dark Avenger. The Unforgiven. Hellraiser.

If you want to find them, a few simple queries on a handful of bulletin boards can smoke them out. They love publicity. They communicate via anonymous Internet messages with bizarre routing addresses. They call over untraceable phone lines. They're careful not to leave tracks, because they are pursued by their own personal sleuths—virus researchers and security specialists from around the world.

They're part of a weird little symbiotic world full of intrigue, where even the good guys use online aliases. The virus researchers think the antivirus software developers inspire the virogens with financial rewards. The software developers accuse the researchers of building viruses on the side. The virogens suck up the resulting fame and infamy like oxygen.

It's hard to separate truth from innuendo. Who are these virogens? And why would they intentionally murder an innocent passerbyte?

It may sound like a video game, but the war between the virogens and the passerbytes is as real as the job you could lose.

PHOTOGRAPH BY AMY GUIP

BY COREY SANDLER

The Criminals: Baudfellas

"If someone gets a virus, it's their own f---ing fault," growls The Unforgiven from Sweden.

The 19-year-old virogen called one Saturday night on somebody else's krona, certainly not his own. With him on the weak telephone link was his 18-year-old pal Metal Militia. The line cracked like knuckles, but the voices were those of teenagers at a loss for weekend entertainment. Their outlook is simple: They're not responsible for what happens when, for fun, they create a virus that takes up residence in a computer's memory and gloms onto every disk that comes near as easy as drive $A_:$, $B_:$, $C_:$. (See "How Viruses Get into Your System," page 213.)

'The American government can stop me . . . but they can't stop my virus,' boasts the Bulgarian known only as Dark Avenger.

If you're looking for the bad guys, insists Metal Militia, they're the users. "If they don't back up, it's their own fault. They're the ones using pirated software. They're the ones not using antivirus programs."

The boys from Sweden are part of a busy group of college students that has written more than 30 viruses. They publish them in a newsletter aptly called *Insane Reality.* They take a detached, bloodless view of their antics. "We don't harm people. We harm data," The Unforgiven says sharply, to which his partner adds coldly, "We're not affecting people's lives." Hey, they're not throwing bombs—they're just building them. In their eyes, there's a difference.

Are these two antisocial baudfellas typical technotaggers? Even the folks who track virogens can't be sure. Security specialist Pam Kane, president of Panda Systems in Wilmington, Delaware, says, "I don't think there is ever going to be a virus-writer profile, like there is for the airline hijacker." As with any other tagger, by the time their work is discovered they're long gone. Staying invisible at the end of an untraceable phone line, they prevent the authorities from building accurate psychological sketches.

Maybe. But stitch together a picture of young, disaffected rebels, vicious and without remorse, describe them to a Harvard headshrinker, and you get a different opinion. Professor W. Lawrence Hartmann, a psychiatrist specializing in adolescent behavior, diagnoses the virogens thus: "It sounds like an adolescent joy in a newfound kind of potency. Writing a virus gives the author a sense of power and an exaggeration of one's own presence, like writing graffiti on a much larger scale."

And once past adolescence, the virogens seem to be infected by what passes for maturity. One Chicago-area virus writer, no older than 25, has already checked out of the virus-writing game. Going by the name Nowhere Man, he got into it "to see if it could be done. Once you've done it, it's not worth doing again," he says. He does, however, pass out software that helps other aspiring virogens build their own viruses. He describes his "virus creation library" (VCL) utility like a developer selling an application's ease of use. "You don't have to have a programming background to use VCL," he says.

Another virus writer in his 20s, going by the alias Hellraiser, acknowledges over the telephone, "I was always the rebellious type, so as soon as I got into computers I had to go to the rebellious part of the computer world—the underground hacking, phreaking, viruses. When you are a kid with a computer, what are you going to do? Do you want to go on public domain boards and download shareware and write messages on Fidonet? No, you want to do something cool."

Kane, however, doubts that many of the current, sophisticated viruses are the work of kids. "It takes a very talented programmer with a lot of experience," she says.

That would describe one of the most famous players on the virus stage, Dark Avenger. No one seems to know what he's avenging, but it's believed he started out as a computer science student at the University of Sofia in Bulgaria.

To Dark Avenger, his viruses are his passport. "The American government can stop me from going to the U.S., but they can't stop my virus," he boasted to one virus researcher. "The idea of making a program that would travel on its own and go to places its creator could never go was the most interesting thing for me."

His darkest contribution isn't a virus at all—it's a toolkit he calls the "Mutation Engine." It lets viruses change their appearance and internal structure as they spread, making them difficult to find. He's also written a kind of schizoid virus. The fast-acting version actively searches for targets, spreading and replicating itself on the host system and any other system connected to it. A timed-release variant slowly and almost invisibly eats away at data on a disk so

it's unlikely you'll notice until it's time to kiss your data good-bye.

He may be prolific, but he's also uncharacteristically shy. One person who's smoked him out is an American virus researcher named Sara Gordon. Asking to keep her employers anonymous, Gordon says she is an "independent researcher" at a Midwestern university who works under contract to several corporations as a security specialist.

She first came across Dark Avenger's name during an online virus conference. Participants lambasted his work. That intrigued her. She in turn managed to intrigue Dark Avenger, first by posting questions about him on several bulletin boards, and finally by challenging him to write a virus for her. Sure enough, early in 1992, a new virus called Dedicated appeared. In it, an internal string read, "We dedicate this little virus to Sara Gordon." Eventually, using a Bulgarian dictionary and a British BBS, she posted a message to him. He replied with a modern pen-pal request: to scan her photo into a graphics file and send it to him. She did.

In the atmosphere of paranoia in the virus underground, some don't believe that Gordon and the Dark Avenger have actually spoken. But if you ask her, she'll hand over transcripts of conversations she had with him to reveal what makes him tick.

He told her that he never imagined the viruses would hurt people, just data. In Bulgaria, he said, "PCs were just very expensive toys which nobody could afford and nobody knew how to use. They were only used by some hotshots or their children who had nothing else to play with. I was not aware that there could be any consequences. [My first] virus was so badly written that I never imagined it would leave the town. I only imagined it could leave the neighborhood."

Dark Avenger shrugged off any responsibility as neatly as an operator dropping a caller into voice mail. Like most of the virus writers, he separated his work from its effect. No system would become infected, he said, if people avoided pirated software. "It all depends on human stupidity, you know. It's not the computers' fault that viruses spread."

The Gumshoes: Choose Your Alias

Tracking virus writers and their antagonists is like walking into a convention of JFK assassination-conspiracy buffs. All the players—the authors, the security specialists, and the antivirus software developers—know each others' identities or at least aliases. They have their own unshakable beliefs about who's really responsible for the problem of spreading viruses.

Want wild theories? Some folks who claim to write viruses are actually cops trying to entrap the real criminals.

Want cynical motives? Ask yourself who benefits more from the spreading of viruses than the developers of antivirus software and security consultants. Some virus authors claim that antivirus software developers are responsible for spreading many infections just to boost software sales. Why would they say such a thing? Maybe it's because in the past at least one

Tips from the Virogens for Avoiding Their Work

Virus writers enjoy their work too much to give it up—and even if they mend their ways, there will always be newly adventurous technotaggers to take their place. So how do you avoid becoming one of their victims? Here, in their words, are what the virogens advise you to do. (The security professionals who track the virogens get their say in "Ten Tips from the Trackers," page 212.)

Aristotle: [Virus writers] are going to write something that is totally undetectable. That means that virus scanners are essentially useless. They act as coroners to tell you what it was that ate you. There is no education in the system to teach people how to use the computer so that they don't bring things [like viruses] in. They don't establish rules where if somebody brings in something from home and puts it on a company computer, they get fired. These are million-dollar investments we're talking about; they are not toys.

Dark Avenger: Antivirus products are as useless as viruses. The users spend much more money on buying such products and their updates than they would lose on data damage because of viruses. Viruses would spread much less if "innocent" users did not steal software and if they worked a bit more at their workplace, instead of playing games.

Hellraiser: Get a good scanner first thing. And [develop] a good eye to notice when something is wrong—files running slower than they should, weird error messages. If you turn on your computer and it says, "Mr. Virus has destroyed your hard drive," that's a clue.

Nowhere Man: The fact is that 99 percent of all viruses are not much of a threat if you have any kind of a clue. I'm not saying viruses don't hurt people, but usually when they affect people, it's almost always the person's fault.

TL: On my drive, I have 2,000 viruses just laying around and never in many years has one gotten loose. I don't run scanners. I just categorize what I take from people. I don't run things on my good machines. I don't understand why people actually get infected.

major antivirus maker has offered cash bounties to individuals or companies supplying examples of new viruses. That way, they can figure out a method to inoculate against it and sell updates. Are virus writers surviving and thriving because they have a ready market for their work?

That's ridiculous, counter the antivirus developers. Like police, lawyers, and judges, they wouldn't have anything to do unless some jokers were operating outside the bounds of ordinary society; in most cases, though, the antivirus software developers haven't caused the problems they're out to solve. Their intentions may be pure. (That didn't stop some of them from exploiting the Michelangelo scare to the hilt, even if they had nothing to do with encouraging the virogen who wrote it.)

Some of those same developers whisper that some academic virus "researchers" are actually creating the strains they claim to study. Other denizens of this world claim that Veselin Vladimirov Bontchev, currently a member of the University of Hamburg's Virus Test Center, is none other than the Dark Avenger himself; he denies the charge, insisting he's hot on the trail of his fellow Bulgarian.

Bontchev started following Dark Avenger's trail when he was director of the Laboratory of Computer Virology at the Bulgarian Academy of Sciences in Sofia. Bontchev believes there are currently about 4,100 known PC viruses in the world, with less than 10 percent—about 300—originating in Bulgaria. But he admits that's still a disproportionately large number of viruses for such a small group of users. He cites Russia, The Netherlands, Italy, and the United States as the major virus-producing countries.

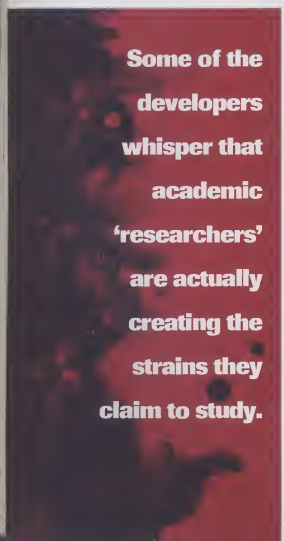
Bontchev describes Dark Avenger as "sick enough to enjoy causing trouble to other people. Most of his viruses are maliciously destructive, slightly and slowly corrupting your data, so that you do not notice it for a long time. When you eventually notice it, it is too late because the corrupted data is already on your backups and there is no way to determine which part of it is corrupted and which is not."

Dark Avenger is such a creep that the one piece of antivirus software he wrote snuffs two of his viruses but silently unleashes a third one at the same time.

Sadly, all Bontchev has to show for five years of study are some clues about Dark Avenger's style. He writes his viruses so that they have a round number of bytes, and he frequently refers to heavy metal groups such as Iron Maiden in his virus code. It's not clear what's going to happen if Bontchev collars Dark Avenger—Bulgarian law being vague on the subject of hacking—but he does say that he knows some folks who'd like to rough him up for the data he's destroyed.

Back here in the States, another cynical detective in the virus underworld is Joe Piazza, president of the Institute of Data Security and Integrity, a computer security firm in Wilmington, Delaware. He blames the antivirus software developers for priming the market with cash bounties. "It is absolutely in their best interests to keep the viruses flowing," he says, accusing them of significantly contributing to the nasties' numbers.

Of course, viruses also help keep Piazza and other security professionals in business, because they assess companies' exposure to security lapses. He believes companies will thrive or die based on the safety of their data. And in this oddly symbiotic world, he needs the virus writers, too. "The hackers and crackers are serving a good function—they are letting us know what the loopholes are so that we can fix them."



The Hideouts: Where Taggers Dare

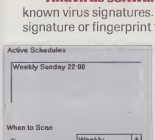
In this rats' nest of intrigue, where do the rodents hang out? Same place any group of technothusiasts hangs out—electronic bulletin board systems. On these BBSs, virus authors spew their nastiest bugs in hopes of getting not only the plaudits of fellow outlaws but also widespread distribution. People like Dark Avenger, Hellraiser, and Nowhere Man are heroes sanctified in great awe. Other authors—those stupid or unfortunate enough to be caught (like Internet worm creator Robert Morris, Jr.)—are categorized as either martyrs to the cause or cautionary examples of poor procedure. Not surprisingly, the antivirus makers also frequent these bulletin boards in search of the latest viruses.

A man who goes by the alias Aristotle is the system operator of one of these bulletin boards. At age 34, he's an old man among the virus kids. "People in the underground think because I'm 34, I'm some kind of fed," he says. Married and the father of two, he recently went back to school to complete his college degree and now does computer consulting

Digital Trip Wires for Safety

Believing that a virus won't attack you is a common mistake. Protect yourself. Whatever some denizens of the virus world think about antivirus software developers, we recommend you take precautions. Symantec (through the Peter Norton Group and the recently acquired Central Point), McAfee, and Reflex all make products that can keep a network or desktop PC safer by preventing, detecting, and helping to repair or recover from a virus attack.

Antivirus software works by scanning for known virus signatures. Every virus has a unique signature or fingerprint to identify itself. The software is also on the alert behind the scenes, looking for viruslike activity such as corrupted file or code trying to write to the boot sector. With a method called checksumming, it creates a numeric representation of the file, takes snapshots of the checksum, and compares it to the original file. A red flag goes up if something looks suspicious. To be effective, a virus must attach itself to an executable or load itself into memory and replicate. Antivirus software commonly isolates the virus and stops the replication, in effect, crippling the virus. If the files are infected, the damaged code is deleted and the proper data pieced back together and, in a sense, "cleaned."



McAfee VirusScan 2.1 lets you set the frequency and time of automatic scans to fit your company's schedule.

Look for alarm and report features in today's antivirus software products. Schedulers for routine scanning, configurable reporting features, and alarms are important, but these should be considered secondary factors. When selecting a package, make sure the one you choose has the following basic features: scanning capabilities for detection of known viruses; a TSR or some sort of resident program that continuously monitors not only for known virus signatures but also for viruslike activity; and the ability to remove a virus and then help to repair or recover from an attack.

Is your network environment compatible with the antivirus software package? Look at what kind of interaction you and your users have with the outside world (via notebooks, modems, and so on). Do you need to support multiple platforms? Be sure to check that the product's site license lets you install it on home computers or networks, as well as on all of your workplace desktops. Bringing infected floppies or files from home to the office is one of the easiest and most common ways to spread viruses.

Software is only as good as the user. You must always scan incoming floppies and files before you introduce them to your PC—even those from shrink-wrapped packages. Antivirus software experts recommend quarantining a dedicated PC to scan all foreign floppies before they are introduced to your system. Most of the top products automatically scan for viruses and viruslike activity, and won't let you install something that is infected. However, reckless users can turn this feature off or choose not to install that portion of the program.

Keep current with regular updates of virus signature files, since 40 to 50 new viruses are discovered each month. Updates are usually available quarterly and are mailed to users directly, or they can be downloaded from a bulletin board system, CompuServe, or America Online.

Back up data religiously. In the event that you are unable to clean up after a virus attack and your only option is to delete the infected files, you risk losing all your data and applications unless you have a clean backup copy of data and programs. Be sure to rotate the disks that you use for backups.

Educate your fellow users about the ramifications of viruses and the vital importance of scanning, updates, and backing up data. There's no worse killer of productivity than the wrenching cry of "virus!" Otherwise, using antivirus software is similar to flossing your teeth just before you go to the dentist—it's worthless. Unless you follow the regimen at all times, you're still at risk. LIESL LA GRANGE

Summary:	No Viruses Found
Items Scanned:	C:
File Type:	Program Files Only
Inoculation:	Disabled
Other Settings:	Compressed Files Not Scanned
Scan Time:	33 seconds

Item	Scanned	Infected	Cleaned
Memory:	Yes	No	No
Master Boot Record:	Yes	No	No
Boot Records:	1	0	0
Files:	541	0	0

Norton AntiVirus 3.0 scans for known viruses, looks for virus activity in the places they're most likely to infect, and inoculates files and memory against corruption.

Ten Tips from The Trackers

What the Experts Advise:

1 Use antivirus software that combines scanning, checksum, and monitoring facilities.

2 Update your scanning software regularly to make sure it can find newly unleashed viruses.

3 Don't use pirated software—you don't know where it's been.

4 Don't move copies of executable files from one computer to another; always install from the distribution disk.

5 Don't boot from a floppy disk of unknown origin; perform a virus scan before using files from such a disk.

6 Treat executable files downloaded from BBSs with suspicion; scan the programs before use.

7 If your system is part of a network, use passwords and other security measures to block unauthorized access.

8 Don't use an obvious password for your account, and don't use the same password on multiple systems.

9 Back up your data files regularly, and rotate the backup disks so that you have copies of files on different disks going back several weeks. Keep backups of your applications' disks, too.

10 If your system begins to act strangely, if program files behave in an unexpected way, or if a file's length or "last saved" date changes unexpectedly, assume you have a virus and perform an aggressive scan. Have a plan in place for notifying users of a possible virus attack.

work for a government contractor.

He is also a self-proclaimed expert on the way antivirus makers purposely or accidentally move viruses around the world. He says that on many virus BBSs, the system operators require users to upload contributions in exchange for downloads of the latest files. He accuses antivirus makers of often adding a new infectious agent for each one they retrieve.

Aristotle tracks viruses the way some folks track carrier pigeons. "I'd create a virus and give it out to somebody, then delete it from my system, and see what happens. The first one I gave somebody showed up three days later on a bulletin board in Switzerland."

Aristotle's no anomaly. A 20-year-old computer store employee who goes only by the initials TL is already a retired virus BBS sysop. He's moved on to phone phreaking—using long-distance lines without paying—and was, naturally, calling on what he said was a temporary and untraceable line.

TL insists that anyone outside the virus clique couldn't possibly understand the kick somebody gets out of having the power to destroy an entire computer system. "When you hack a system, it takes no brain at all to come in and nuke everything, but it takes one hell of a brain to remain on the system. It is a lot more challenging to avoid antiviral software than it is to nuke a drive."

As for the idea of an online community of taggers, TL compares it to a literary roundtable. Writing viruses shouldn't be illegal—it should be thought of as a creative process like writing a book. "Some people write books about suicide. That's a lot more destructive," TL insists. "I don't think it should be illegal to write viruses, but it should be to spread them."

But where's the glory in being the author of a work you dare not acknowledge publicly? Panda Systems' Pam Kane has an interesting analogy for the sort of fame that "successful" virus authors might achieve. They're like some wealthy crazy who hires a thief to steal a famous work of art. "The person who now owns it cannot [display it]. It hangs in a very small room of a very large house."

She insists that we're still not safe from really nasty viruses. They're not likely to be posted on BBSs frequented by The Unforgiven and his ilk, because that gives the antivirus developers an immediate heads-up that a new strain is a potential threat. "If there is a seriously malevolent virus writer out there," says Kane, "he will not put it up on a BBS."

It's the same old story: When you're walking in a bad neighborhood, you've gotta watch your back. But now that your PC makes the entire world your neighborhood, you've gotta watch your disk. They'll find you if you let them.

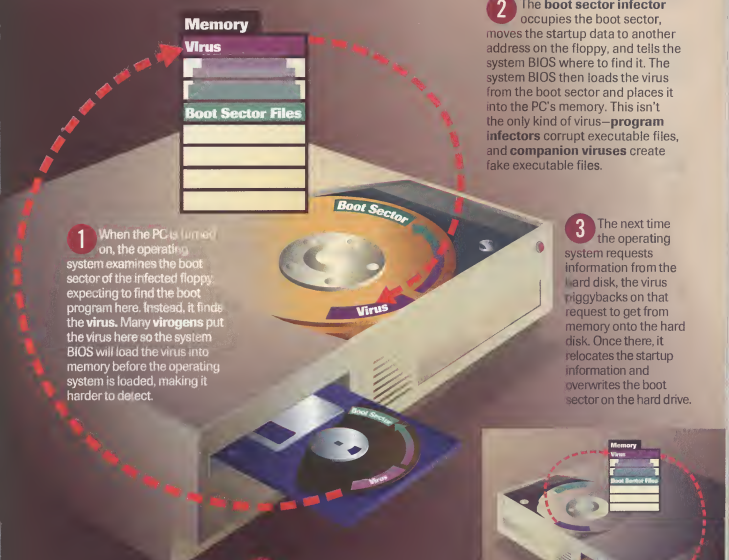
COREY SANDLER *has written more than 70 books on computers, video games, and travel. Several years ago, his own lab was paralyzed by a virus from a commercially distributed video driver from Taiwan.*

'The first virus I gave somebody showed up three days later on a bulletin board in Switzerland,' says Aristotle.

HOW IT WORKS

HOW VIRUSES GET INTO YOUR SYSTEM

Computer viruses are like human viruses—they come from contact with something that's already infected. The way in which the digital kind snuggles into your computer is remarkably simple.



1 When the PC is turned on, the operating system examines the boot sector of the infected floppy, expecting to find the boot program here. Instead, it finds the **virus.** Many **virogens** put the virus here so the system BIOS will load the virus into memory before the operating system is loaded, making it harder to detect.

2 The **boot sector infector** occupies the boot sector, moves the startup data to another address on the floppy, and tells the system BIOS where to find it. The system BIOS then loads the virus from the boot sector and places it into the PC's memory. This isn't the only kind of virus—**program infectors** corrupt executable files, and **companion viruses** create fake executable files.

3 The next time the operating system requests information from the hard disk, the virus piggybacks on that request to get from memory onto the hard disk. Once there, it relocates the startup information and overwrites the boot sector on the hard drive.

4 Now that the virus has established itself, every time the system is booted from the hard drive, the virus is loaded and can infect any disk via the same route in reverse. Unfortunately, some viruses, such as **stealth** or **polymorphic viruses**, are specifically designed to protect themselves from antivirus software as they spread.

KEY WORDS

Virus: The difference between a virus and any other program or block of program code is that a virus replicates itself to overwrite other data, unlike other executable programs.

Virogen: In the virus community, the people who write viruses are called virogens, as in virus generators.

Boot Sector Infector: These reside in the boot sector and are transmitted through the use of infected floppy disks.

Program Infector: A virus that inserts itself into an executable program is called a program infector. Executable files include COM, EXE, SYS, OVL, MNU, and PRG files.

Companion Virus: To infect the system, a companion virus will create a COM file with exactly the same name as an existing EXE file. That way, when the user types the name of a program to be executed, the virus is accessed first. Under MS-DOS, the COM files are executed before the EXE files.

Stealth Virus: A virus that employs a mechanism specifically aimed at defeating an antivirus program takes its name from the idea of a bomber evading radar. A stealth virus makes a copy of original code and stores it elsewhere, redirecting calls to the clean data while the virus proceeds to infect the system.

Polymorphic Virus: A virus that rewrites its own code strings so that later generations don't resemble the parent is known as a polymorphic (shape-changing) virus. This generational masking makes it more difficult for antivirus scanners to detect the new offspring.

Help

BRIAN LIVINGSTON GOES ONLINE FOR WINDOWS UPGRADES

Broken Windows? Get These Patches

Despite everything you've heard and read about Chicago (the next version of Windows), almost everyone is still using some flavor of Windows 3.1. What you may not know is that while the release of Windows 4.0 is still months away, Microsoft has been upgrading good old Windows 3.1 in the meantime. Unlike DOS, which operates mostly with a single command interpreter (COMMAND.COM) and two "hidden" files, Windows depends on *hundreds* of files—more than 400 on the distribution disks. Depending on your hardware configuration, the files appropriate for your display, mouse, and so on are copied to your hard drive when you install Windows. Not surprisingly, an improvement to one or two of these files can make a big difference in the smooth operation of Windows.

You may never have heard about these improved files because Microsoft does little to publicize their existence. When a file gets a bug fix or performance enhancement, Microsoft places it on a BBS. From that point on, the file may be copied to other electronic systems for wider distribution. Unless you happen to ask a technical support person at Microsoft about a specific problem you have, you will probably never hear about these fixes. Unlike new releases of products like Microsoft Word and Excel, driver bug fixes don't get an advertising budget.

The Master File The key to these tweaks and patches is an obscure little text file called WDL.TXT. This is sort of a table of contents to the Windows Driver Library. Unlike public libraries, which store decades' worth of written output, the Driver Library holds only those files that are new or upgraded since Windows 3.1 came out in April 1992. Even so, the library includes more than 200 files.

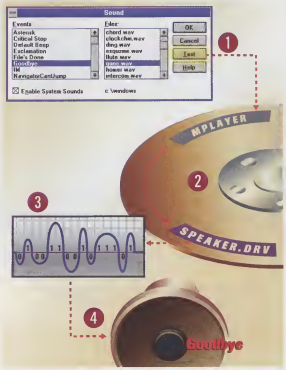
You can obtain WDL.TXT through a variety of means. One of the best is to dial Microsoft's own internal BBS at (206) 936-6735 with your modem set to 8 data bits, no parity, and 1 stop bit. Microsoft maintains this BBS specifically to distribute new files to users, and the BBS is first to get the latest versions. It's also free of any connect-time charges; you pay only for the cost of the long-distance call to Redmond.

An even cheaper way to get the upgrades you need—if you use the Internet for data access—is to obtain the files directly from Microsoft's Internet server at ftp.microsoft.com. Depending on your method of connecting to the Internet (through a direct connection, a mail gateway, or a service provider), this can be cheaper than a phone call.

If you have a CompuServe account, you can download WDL.TXT from the MSL forum (type GO MSL at any ! prompt). MSL stands for the Microsoft Software Library, which also includes forums that support Microsoft applications and DOS, as well as the Windows Driver Library. From the text menus, specify WDL.TXT, then type DOWN and choose a protocol (CompuServe B, Xmodem, or Ymodem) to copy WDL.TXT to your PC.

What can you do if you have no modem or Internet access? It's still possible to see whether any new drivers or

HOW IT WORKS A MUCH-IMPROVED **SPEAKER** DRIVER



SPEAK.EXE is one of the many files listed in WDL.TXT. This speaker driver plays WAV files through your internal speaker, so you don't need a sound card. Download it, execute it (it's a self-extracting file) and install it. Here's how this driver works:

1. Play: You play a WAV file from Windows.

2. Pass: MPLAYER, the Windows Multimedia Player, passes control of the sound to SPEAKER.DRV.

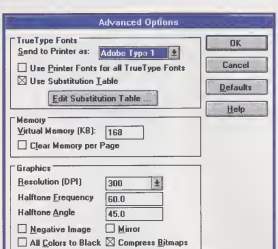
3. Prepare: SPEAKER.DRV acts as a digital-to-analog converter, converting the WAV file to audio format so that your internal speaker can reproduce it.

4. Produce: The internal speaker plays a tinny but recognizable sound.

WORKAROUND

IMPROVE **PRINTING** RIGHT NOW

PostScript Update: Don't settle for your existing printer driver. One of the improved drivers described in WDL.TXT is Version 3.58 of the Windows PostScript driver, which now works reliably with more fonts. This lets you create a catalog of all your fonts (if you have scores of them), or work with other complex documents.



other upgrades apply to your software. Call Microsoft's Windows telephone support at (206) 637-7098 to find out whether there is a new file that fixes specific problems you have, or ask to have a copy of WDL.TXT mailed to you.

The Windows Driver Library is made up almost entirely of new driver files for three types of hardware: printers, video adapter boards, and network adapter boards. Unfortunately, the Library has no solution for the biggest problem afflicting Windows users—the 64K limit on the Free System Resources that you see in Program Manager's Help, About box. When the resources drop below about 20 percent (after being consumed by icons, toolbars, and other GUI flotsam), the performance and reliability of Windows becomes erratic. There will be no solution to this problem until the release of Windows 4.0 expands these resources.

Step Up to 3.11 (Sort of) Something else that you won't find in WDL.TXT, but which *is* available now, is a "step-up" upgrade file that supposedly converts Windows 3.1 into Windows 3.11. This file, WW0981.EXE, does not upgrade Windows to the peer-network product, Windows for Workgroups 3.11. Nor does it truly upgrade a Windows 3.1 system to the same Windows 3.11 product that Microsoft has been selling for several months. (To do this, WW0981.EXE would have to contain all of the 200 or so drivers in the Windows Driver Library. The presence of these "refresh" drivers is the main difference between Windows 3.1 and Windows 3.11.)

Instead, WW0981.EXE merely includes a handful of upgraded printer and video drivers, along with a few "kernel" files and slightly improved Novell NetWare drivers. You don't really need to install this upgrade unless one of the following describes you:

- You need a new PostScript driver or new "universal" printer driver. Don't bother downloading these new drivers unless you have been getting error messages from your PostScript printer or have been having problems with a "mini" Windows printer driver (a driver smaller than 50K) that relies on the universal printer driver—UNIDRV.DRV.
- You want a new KRNL386.EXE file that works better with some software. Specifically, the new kernel more accurately handles some situations in which third-party software installs itself and then restarts Windows after its setup routine is completed.
- You're looking for new common dialog boxes (such as File Open) that work with diskless workstations (PCs that load Windows from the network).

Better Drivers This leaves us with the individual goodies that are listed in WDL.TXT. Unlike the files in WW0981.EXE (which few people need), almost every Windows user will probably find one driver or another in WDL.TXT that will work better than his or her current drivers. The best stuff you'll find is for printers, graphics, network, audio adapters.

Almost every major printer manufacturer is represented in the Windows Driver

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Library with drivers that have been improved or created since the release of Windows 3.1. The fixes range from the elimination of disastrous General Protection Faults (GPFs) to the mere addition of more paper sizes in Windows' Print Setup dialog boxes.

Here you will find new drivers for Apple LaserWriters, Brothers, Canon BubbleJets, Citizens, Compaq Pagemarqs, Epsons, Hewlett-Packards (including 4 DeskJet, 15 LaserJet, 2 PaintJet, and 2 QuietJet models), IBMs, NEC Pinwriters, Panasonic KXs, Stars, Toshibas, and many others.

The biggest advance in the graphics adapters category is probably in the multimedia video drivers, which support "paletized VGA" and other functions for CD-ROM–based presentations. But if you've purchased a multimedia system lately, you almost certainly have these drivers already installed on your hard drive.

The Windows Driver Library is also the final resting place for those dominant graphics standards of yesterday—EGA, Hercules, and (shudder) CGA. Remember running Windows 1.01 in CGA's lovely 320-by-240 monochrome mode? Sorry, I guess I'm showing my age.

More relevant to today's Windows users are drivers that include upgrades for graphics adapters from ATI, Cornerstone, HP, S3, Tseng Labs, Western Digital/Paradise (90C30- and 90C31-based boards), and a bunch of others.

There's also a new Super VGA driver to replace the one provided with Windows 3.1. The new driver supports 1,024-by-768 resolution, but only for adapters that are 100 percent compatible with the VESA specification for this resolution—a claim few adapters could make until recently.

Virtually every major manufacturer of network adapter boards has a new driver in the library. There are simply too many to list here. Suffice it to say that if you use a network, and you've had reliability or performance problems with Windows, search WDL.TXT for a new network adapter driver.

Check out the new, improved audio adapters. There are new drivers for the Artisoft Sounding Board, IBM M-Audio Adapter, and ThunderBoard in the library. But the utility that will interest the most Windows users is SPEAK.EXE—a driver that Microsoft says will play sound effects on a plain old internal speaker, with no sound board required. Apparently, SPEAK.EXE works on only about 90 percent of all PCs, so if you have an odd system, you may still get nothing other than the usual beep. But it's definitely worth a try.

Grab Bag The remaining contents of the library can only be described as a potluck of peculiar add-ons. There is a sort of "elephant's graveyard" quality to some of these offerings: The Reversi game that was dropped from Windows 3.1 is here, as well as the forgotten MS-DOS executive shell from Windows 2.x. And you'll find some wallpaper and sound files that were too big to fit on the Windows 3.1 disks, like Arches, Chitz, Marble, and Tartan (wallpaper), and Chord and Tada (sound files).

Two files that are useful to technical support people are WININI.WRI and SYSINI.WRI. These files contain descriptions of the meanings of most settings in your WIN.INI and SYSTEM.INI files, respectively. If you have a burning curiosity about what a setting in either of your INI files does, the WRI files (in Windows Write format) probably contain the answer. These new files are more extensive than the WRI files that are included with the Windows 3.1 distribution diskettes.

Like other files in the Windows Driver Library, WININI.WRI and SYSINI.WRI are compressed. You'll need to download the file WRI.EXE and run it once (as described in "Installing the New Drivers," at left) to decompress both WRI files.

One of the most intriguing files in this section is the Access driver. When you install this driver, it makes your keyboard easier to handle, in several alternative ways. For example, you can configure the driver so that you don't have to hold down two keys at once for key combinations like Ctrl-Esc (which brings up the Task List). You can press and release the Ctrl key, and then press the Esc key independently. This driver was developed for people with limited dexterity, but it can be quite useful for individuals who aren't physically challenged, too.

You may not find the solution to all your problems online, but Microsoft's patches, fixes, and updated drivers can certainly make Windows better. See you online.

HOW TO DO IT — INSTALLING THE NEW DRIVERS

Uncompress and Run: Once you've downloaded the drivers you need from WDL.TXT, you need to take one more step—and it's an important one. Each EXE file in the library is actually a compressed file that contains the driver you want, as well as a text file that describes the specific procedure to install the driver. You may think you don't need to read no stinkin' manuals, but each driver has a different installation routine, so you really do need to read these instructions.

Most importantly, you need to make sure that you place each EXE file in a separate directory before you extract its files. This is because the files probably have the same names as existing Windows files. Extracting these files into a Windows directory before they are properly installed can cause Windows to crash.

You must run each filename once at a DOS prompt in that file's separate directory to make the self-extracting routine work. For example, if you put the SPEAK.EXE file in a C:\DRIVER directory, go to that directory and type SPEAK to extract the speaker files.

Don't ask me why Microsoft can't populate the Windows Driver Library with self-extracting files that work in Windows itself. Maybe Bill Gates can whip up a GUI self-extractor some weekend.

In any event, you should be able to find a driver in the library that will provide you with better reliability, or—in the case of the tiny speaker driver—hours of pointless experimentation with Windows' sound files!

BRIAN LIVINGSTON *is the author of* Windows 3.1 Secrets *(1992) and* More Windows Secrets *(1993), and co-author of* Windows Gizmos *(1994). All three are published by IDG Books.*

I don't understand

my new healthcare plan,

Latin,

my parents,

how Teru can be so popular,

why athletes make

more money than doctors,

why everybody makes

more money than me,

and why anyone would buy

an NEC SuperScript™ 610 printer.

NOVEMBER 1992

BEST SELLER
DESKTOP BUSINESS
PRINTER

$50 REBATE
7/1/94 THROUGH 9/30/94

Why? Because it's the fastest and easiest personal laser printer you will ever use.

Besides you're smart enough to recognize a good idea when you see one. You're not afraid of new technology. And you're definitely tired of waiting every time you print from Windows.

But still you have your doubts. What exactly is this new technology? And what's in it for you?

Well, it's called GDI printing and it works like this. GDI (Graphical Device Interface) is the native language of Microsoft Windows.™ Because the SuperScript 610 thinks and speaks the same language it doesn't have to translate or reformat your documents before it can print. Which means it's 30% to 300% faster than ordinary printers. And what you see on the screen is truly what you get.

Okay, this is obviously a great Windows printer. But can it print PCL and DOS? Of course. As long as you open the application from within Windows. There's even a $99 PostScript™ option if you need it.

With all this sophisticated technology, you'd expect the 610 printer to be complicated and hard to use. But it's actually much easier to use than ordinary printers. And it only takes minutes to install.

To achieve this kind of ease we did have to eliminate a few things, however. Like the controller. Why have one when the PC can do the file processing? It's faster and more efficient. It also allows you to print fonts and graphics without any limitations. And every time you upgrade your PC, you automatically upgrade your printer.

We also moved the operator panel to the PC screen — where it belongs. That way graphical displays and animated icons can show you exactly what's going on at all times.

By the way, the SuperScript 610 is extremely compact, 300 dpi, prints 6 pages per minute and it comes with a 2-year overnight replacement warranty.

And it costs under $500. What's so hard to understand about that? For more information, call 1-800-NEC-INFO or for details via fax, call NEC FastFacts™ at 1-800-366-0476, and request document #SW610.

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NEC

Circle 219 on reader service card.

TUNE WINDOWS FOR WORKGROUPS 3.11

A Truly Better Windows than Windows

If there's an award for most puzzling product name, Windows for Workgroups 3.11 would be the hands-down winner. Yes, this version of Windows includes peer-to-peer networking capabilities, but it also works just fine in a "workgroup" of a single PC. And although the Windows interface is virtually unchanged, look under the hood and you'll see a far more radical upgrade than the minor numbering change would suggest. This is the new Windows standard. Most PCs sold today come with Windows for Workgroups 3.11 preinstalled. If you're using Windows 3.1, you might want to upgrade even if networking isn't on your must-have list. In exchange for 10MB of disk space, you get better performance, thanks to 32-bit virtual device drivers developed for the next generation of Windows (currently known as Chicago). You also get an improved File Manager, a surprisingly useful Clipboard manager, and a built-in send/receive fax utility.

Most of the Windows expertise you've developed over the years is transferable to Windows for Workgroups 3.11. But there are a few important tune-ups you might overlook, because they're masked by familiar dialog boxes.

• Start smoother. Because it relies on protected-mode drivers, Windows for Workgroups 3.11 no longer supports standard mode, so the WIN /S option doesn't work anymore. If you need to turn off networking, however, you can do so when you start Windows for Workgroups with the command WIN /N.

• Share smarter. Under Windows 3.1, the only way for databases and other applications to manage file locking and sharing is via the DOS utility SHARE.EXE. In fact, some applications like Word 6.0 for Windows automatically insert a SHARE line in AUTOEXEC.BAT.

Windows for Workgroups 3.11 manages file sharing with VSHARE.386, a 32-bit virtual device driver that completely replaces the 16-bit real-mode DOS utility. VSHARE is installed by default under Windows for Workgroups 3.11. To verify that it's set up properly, look in the [386 Enhanced] section of SYSTEM.INI for the following line:

```
device=VSHARE.386
```

With VSHARE installed, you can safely remove the SHARE line from your AUTOEXEC.BAT file—and you'll have one less TSR to worry about.

• File faster. The most noteworthy new feature in Windows for Workgroups 3.11 also has the most confusing name. It's called 32-bit file access, and when properly configured, it dramatically speeds up hard disk reads and writes.

Two virtual device drivers combine to make 32-bit file access possible. A protected-mode driver, VFAT.386, replaces the 16-bit DOS file allocation table (FAT) with a faster, 32-bit file system. VFAT's performance-boosting partner is VCACHE.386, which similarly replaces SmartDrive's 16-bit cache with a 32-bit protected-mode cache.

Don't confuse Windows for Workgroups' 32-bit file access with the 32-bit disk access feature introduced in Windows 3.1. The latter won't work with most SCSI and ESDI drives, a few IDE drives, or compressed disks. But even if your hardware won't support 32-bit disk access, you can probably use 32-bit file access, thanks to another Windows for Workgroups virtual device driver, the real mode mapper (RMM.D32), which routes VFAT requests back to DOS for processing.

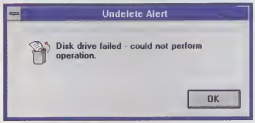
By default, 32-bit file access is not enabled. To turn it on, open Control Panel, double-click on the 386 Enhanced icon, click on the Virtual Memory button and then on the Change button. Make sure the box labeled "Use 32-bit File Access" is checked, then choose OK.

There are several situations under which 32-bit file access won't work. Fortunately, it's easy to avoid most of them:

• Watch out for real-mode DOS utilities. Real-mode network redirectors and

WORKAROUNDS UNDERMINED UNDELETE?

Wrong Answer: When you run the Windows version of Microsoft's handy Undelete utility (MWUNDEL.EXE) with 32-bit file access enabled, you might see this error message, or a similar one.



The Fix: The utility is trying to write directly to the disk via DOS interrupt 26, a Windows for Workgroups no-no. Instead, turn off 32-bit file access or exit Windows and run the DOS version of the Undelete utility.

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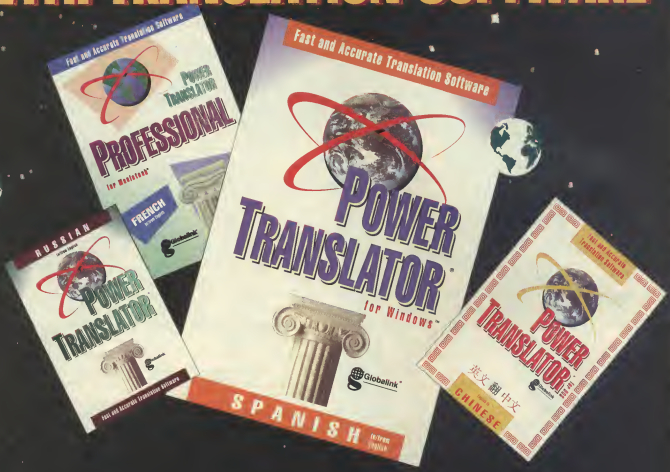

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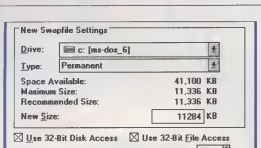
CAUTION MISSING DIALOG DIGITS

Crunched Number? When you run Windows for Workgroups 3.11 with 32-bit file access enabled and a cache size over 9,984K, the cache size in the Virtual Memory dialog box of the Control Panel is truncated. It should read 10240.



memory-resident programs that keep a file open while Windows loads will interfere with 32-bit file access.

• Steer clear of SUBST, ASSIGN, and JOIN. Because of the way they tamper with file and directory names, the external DOS commands SUBST.EXE, ASSIGN.COM, and JOIN.EXE are incompatible with Windows for Workgroups' 32-bit file access.

• Compress with care. The DoubleSpace utility in MS-DOS 6.0 won't work with 32-bit file access. Later versions of MS-DOS fixed this problem, and Stac Electronics' Stacker 4.0 also works well with VFAT. Stacker 3.1 (or earlier) users may wish to upgrade to Stacker 4.0 if they can, to ensure compatibility.

• Keep your cache size down. Low memory can cause VFAT to behave unpredictably. See "Cache Flow," below for advice on how big to set VCACHE.

• Have a safety net handy. To disable 32-bit disk access and start Windows for Workgroups 3.11, type WIN /D:F at the DOS prompt. You can just as easily disable 32-bit file access with the command WIN /D:C. Although disabling either (or both) of these decreases performance, it shouldn't affect other aspects of your system.

Cache Flow VCACHE.386 provides the caching on VFAT-enabled drives and network drives, while SmartDrive caches CD-ROM and floppy drives. Memory used by each cache is locked out of reach of the other. So setting the right cache size is a question of balancing the amount of memory devoted to VCACHE and SmartDrive.

How much memory should you devote to VCACHE? The theoretical maximum size is a staggering 2GB. Since most Windows users have a slightly smaller RAM budget, the 386 Enhanced dialog box in the Control Panel stops at a healthy 24,576K.

In practice, cache size is limited by the amount of physical RAM on your system. Set the cache size to a number that's larger than the physical amount of RAM available and VFAT won't work. If you set it to a smaller number that doesn't leave enough working room for Windows, you'll find disk reads and writes that should take nanoseconds now take forever.

If you don't have a CD-ROM drive, the solution is simple: Get rid of SmartDrive. If you need both caches, make sure that the amount of memory allocated to SmartDrive's WinCacheSize parameter and the cache size allocated to VCACHE.386 do not total more than 30 percent of your RAM.

On a machine with 8MB of RAM, you might choose to allocate 2048K to VCACHE. In that case, set the SmartDrive WinCacheSize (the second value in the SmartDrive command line) to 384K. ED BOTT

PC Contact WORD GADGETS

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Woody's Office Power Pack (WOPR) 6.0 is a much-needed Word 6.0 add-on. It includes a sophisticated file manager with immediate access to your most frequently used files and directories; a fancy, flexible envelope printer that can even handle logos; an icon editor; a clip art "scrapbook"; and much more. Download WOPR6L.ZIP from PC Contact's data library 3 (Utilities/Misc.). See page 250 for information on accessing PC Contact or ordering the disk from Public Brand Software.

WIN TIPS

MAKE TEXT

Problem: *Cardfile doesn't export to plain ASCII files.*

Solution: Install the Windows Generic/Text Only printer driver, which is useful for creating text files. Select Main, Control Panel, Printers, Generic/Text Only, Install, and insert the original Windows disk as prompted. Once the driver is installed, use it with Cardfile to export your card file databases to text files by selecting File, Print Setup and selecting the Text Only printer. When you print, you'll print to a text file instead of an actual printer. You can also use it with Terminal to capture log files of your Terminal sessions (something Terminal ordinarily can't do). Use it with any application to create plain-text files you can import anywhere, or print on any printer.

DYLAN TWENEY
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

DOS OR SHELL?

Problem: *You keep forgetting that you're in a Windows DOS shell and you shut down without returning to Windows.*

Solution: Create a flashing message to remind you to return to Windows. Using a text editor such as EDIT in DOS 6.x, add the following line to your AUTOEXEC.BAT:

```
SET WINPMT=$E[36;5m Type ↵
^EXIT to return to Windows ↵
^$E[m$_$P$G
```

This changes your DOS prompt when you're in a DOS session under Windows. You need to load the ANSI.SYS driver to make this sequence work. Add the following line to your CONFIG.SYS:

```
DEVICE=C:\DOS\ANSI.SYS
```

Then reboot your computer.

YOSHIKI OKADA
TEL AVIV, ISRAEL

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WINDOWS EXCLUSIVE

Problem: *You use Windows exclusively and never go to a DOS prompt.*

Solution: Make Windows start on boot-up and restart automatically whenever you try to exit from it. All you need to do is add the following lines to the end of AUTOEXEC.BAT:

```
:STARTWINDOWS
WIN
ECHO ↲
↳Press any key to restart Windows, ↲
↳or press Ctrl-C to return to DOS.
PAUSE > NUL
GOTO STARTWINDOWS
```

DYLAN TWENEY
SANTA BARBARA, CALIFORNIA

ICON FONTS

Problem: *When you minimize an application, you want its name displayed in a font of your choice.*

Solution: By default, Windows uses the innocuous MS Sans Serif. To change it, open WIN.INI (from Program Manager, select File, Run, and type WIN.INI), go to the [Desktop] section, and add the line IconTitleFaceName=Times New Roman (or choose any font to the right of an equal sign from the [fonts] section of WIN.INI). Now all application names will appear in your font.

JOHN MONTGOMERY
HELP EDITOR

FLYING SMILES

Problem: *The Flying Windows screen saver is just plain boring.*

Solution: Create your own screen saver with flying smiles, skulls, glasses, or any of the dozens of other symbols available. The Flying Windows screen saver uses character 0255 in the WingDings character set (which is the Windows logo). All you have to do is replace that symbol with the character of your choice. First, go to the Accessories group, select Character Map, choose WingDings from the Font list, and find a character you want to use. Click on that character, and watch the bottom right status bar display a keystroke equivalent. For example, J is a smile, L is a mad face, and $ is a pair of glasses. Note: These characters are case sensitive. Before you start, go to File Manager and make a copy of the SSFLYWIN.SCR file in the \WINDOWS directory, just in case. Then open Write (also in the Accessories group), select File, Open, select SSFLYWIN.SCR and click on No Conversion. Proceed with caution—do not add or delete anything other than as instructed. If you make a mistake, exit without saving, and start over. Select Find, Find, and type Flying for the search text. Click on Cancel when you have a match, and type anything you want over the word Windows, as long as it's the same number of characters (seven). Again, select Find, Find, and type DISPLAY for the search text. Click on Cancel when you're there. Type your character over the character to the left of the word DISPLAY—it may appear as an accented y. Select File, Save and then exit. To activate this screen saver, go to Main, Control Panel, Desktop, Screen Saver, and you'll see Flying Smiles or whatever you've named it. You can easily create several of these by copying the original file and making different changes to each copy. Be sure to leave the SCR extension, or Windows won't recognize it as a screen saver.

MATTHEW J. LAKE, SENIOR EDITOR AND
YAEL LI-RON, ASSOCIATE EDITOR

PROGMAN TITLE

Problem: *You want to customize Program Manager's title bar.*

Solution: In File Manager, create an association for the GRP extension to PROGMAN.EXE. Then create a new program item in the StartUp group by selecting File, New, Program Item. Type the text you want to display on Program Manager's title bar in the Description box and type MAIN.GRP in the Command Line box. Next time you launch Windows, your personalized title will appear. Note that this operation won't work if you load StartUp minimized.

MIKE SERRANO
LAFAYETTE, COLORADO

ENVIRONMENTAL DISASTER

Problem: *You encounter an "Out of Environment Space" error message when running DOS under Windows.*

Solution: Open DOSPROMPT.PIF with the PIF Editor. In the Optional Parameters box, type /E:800, then save your changes and exit. This will expand the environment space for your DOS session to 800 bytes. If you still get "Out of Environment Space" messages, increase the number until the errors go away.

RONNY RICHARDSON
CHAMBLEE, GEORGIA

HOT TIP RENAME YOUR PRINTER

Problem: You want to give your printers more interesting, "colorful" names, Macintosh-style.

Solution: Mac users can name their printer drivers anything they want, but in Windows, your choices are limited to the printer model. Here's a way around this limitation. In Notepad, open CONTROL.INF, which resides in the \WINDOWS\SYSTEM directory. Identify the line that contains your printer's name, for example:

```
6:pscript.DRV,6:HPeli523.WPD,"HP LaserJet IIISi PostScript:",↲
↳"DEVICESPECIFIC"
```

Insert any fun name in place of your printer's name in quotes and leave the rest of the line intact. Save and exit Notepad. To enable this name, select Main, Control Panel, Printers, click on Add and double-click on your printer's new name.

NOEL NYMAN
SEATTLE, WASHINGTON

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CREATE YOUR OWN RECURSIVE SWITCH

Run DOS Commands All Over the Place

With few exceptions, DOS's file management commands work in one directory at a time. Sometimes this can be rather inefficient. For example, in DOS 5 and later you can type DIR *.TMP /S to list all of the files on the current drive that have the extension TMP. But you can't type DEL *.TMP /S to delete them, because the DEL command doesn't support the /S switch. Your only recourse is to delete the TMP files one directory at a time.

This month, we'll look at two methods to extend the reach of ordinary DOS commands. The first method involves a batch file; the second relies on a machine language program that you can create in a few minutes with DEBUG.

Clean Sweep Never underestimate the power of a good batch file. What follows is SWEEP, a tool to make any DOS command recursive. Use a text editor to create it, and name the file SWEEP.BAT:

```
@ECHO OFF
IF "%1"=="" GOTO ERROR
ECHO @CD %%2 >
C:\DOS\DIRECTOR.BAT
ECHO @%1 %2 %3 %4 %5 %6 %7 ↵
↳%8 %9 >> C:\DOS\DIRECTOR.BAT
DIR \/S | FIND "Directory" > ↵
↳C:\DOS\CMDLIST.TXT
ECHO EXIT >> C:\DOS\CMDLIST.TXT
COMMAND < C:\DOS\CMDLIST.TXT
DEL C:\DOS\DIRECTOR.BAT
DEL C:\DOS\CMDLIST.TXT
CD \
GOTO END
:ERROR
ECHO Syntax: %0 command
:END
```

It's simple to use: To delete every file on the default drive that has the TMP extension, type SWEEP DEL *.TMP.

SWEEP.BAT takes the command you type following the word SWEEP—in this case, DEL *.TMP—and executes it in every directory on the current drive. If C: is the default drive, then the command SWEEP DEL *.TMP does a DEL *.TMP in the root directory, in all of the subdirectories, in the subdirectories' subdirectories, and so on, until it has processed every directory on C:.

There are two things you should know about SWEEP.BAT. First, you must use DOS 5 or higher: SWEEP.BAT uses a DIR /S command, and earlier versions don't support the /S switch. Second, three commands inside SWEEP.BAT reference the file C:\DOS\DIRECTOR.BAT. It's not imperative that this file be stored in the \DOS directory of drive C:, but it's very important that it be stored in a directory named in your Path statement. If you don't have a C:\DOS directory, or it's not in your Path for some reason, edit the batch file to locate DIRECTOR.BAT in one of the directories identified by your Path environment variable.

How does it work? Lines 3 and 4 create a batch file named DIRECTOR.BAT, which contains two commands: one to change to the directory specified by the %2 parameter, and another to execute the command entered after SWEEP. If you started SWEEP by typing SWEEP DEL *.TMP, DIRECTOR.BAT would look like this:

```
CD %2
DEL *.TMP
```

Line 5 combines the DIR and FIND commands to create a new file named CMDLIST.TXT that contains a list of every directory on the current drive, like this:

```
Directory of C:\
Directory of C:\DOS
Directory of C:\WINDOWS
```

HOW TO DO IT — RE-CREATE OUR REPEAT UTILITY

This DEBUG script executes a command for every directory on a drive. Download SEPTIP.ZIP, which contains this script and others, from PC Contact's data library 2 (Hot Tips/Secrets). See page 250 for instructions.

```
N REPEAT.COM
E 0100 EB 5C 90 5C 00 43 4F 4D
E 0108 53 50 45 43 3D 00 00 00
E 0110 00 00 00 FF FF FF FF FF
E 0118 FF FF FF 53 79 6E 74 61
E 0120 78 3A 20 52 45 50 45 41
E 0128 54 20 63 6F 6D 6D 61 6E
E 0130 64 24 43 61 6E 6E 6F 74
E 0138 20 66 69 6E 64 20 43 4F
E 0140 4D 4D 41 4E 44 2E 43 4F
E 0148 4D 24 49 6E 73 75 66 66
E 0150 69 63 69 65 6E 74 20 6D
E 0158 65 6D 6F 72 79 24 FC BE
E 0160 81 00 AC 3C 20 74 FB 3C
E 0168 09 74 F7 3C 0D 75 0C BA
E 0170 1B 01 B4 09 CD 21 B8 01
E 0178 4C CD 21 B4 4A BB 00 10
E 0180 CD 21 BA 4A 01 72 EB C7
E 0188 06 0F 01 7F 02 8C 1E 11
E 0190 01 8B DE 4E 8F 83 02 AC
E 0198 AA 3C 0D 75 FA 88 CE 2B
E 01A0 C8 80 C1 03 88 0E 7F 02
E 01A8 BE 05 01 B9 08 00 8E 06
E 01B0 2C 00 E8 A9 00 BA 32 01
E 01B8 72 B8 BE 83 03 26 8A 05
E 01C0 47 88 04 46 0A C0 75 F5
E 01C8 C6 06 83 04 5C B4 47 32
E 01D0 D2 BE 84 04 CD 21 B4 3B
E 01D8 BA 03 01 CD 21 E8 13 00
E 01E0 B4 3B BA 83 04 CD 21 B8
E 01E8 00 4C CD 21 2A 2E 2A 00
E 01F0 2E 2E 00 55 BA 2F CD 21
E 01F8 53 06 83 EC 2B BB EC B4
E 0200 1A B8 D5 CD 21 52 B8 00
E 0208 4B BB 0D 01 BA 83 03 CD
E 0210 21 73 06 BA 32 01 E9 59
E 0218 FF B4 1A 5A CD 21 B4 4E
E 0220 B9 17 00 BA EC 01 CD 21
E 0228 72 25 80 7E 1E 2E 74 19
E 0230 F6 46 15 10 74 13 B4 3B
E 0238 8B D5 83 C2 1E CD 21 E8
E 0240 B1 FF B4 3B BA F0 01 CD
E 0248 21 B4 4F CD 21 73 DB 83
E 0250 C4 2B B4 1A 8C DB 1F 5A
E 0258 CD 21 8E DB 5D C3 FC 33
E 0260 FF 51 56 57 F3 A6 74 12
E 0268 5F 32 C0 B9 FF FF F2 AF
E 0270 5E 59 26 80 3D 00 75 E9
E 0278 F9 C3 83 C4 06 F8 C3 3F
E 0280 2F 43 20
RCX
183
W
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```

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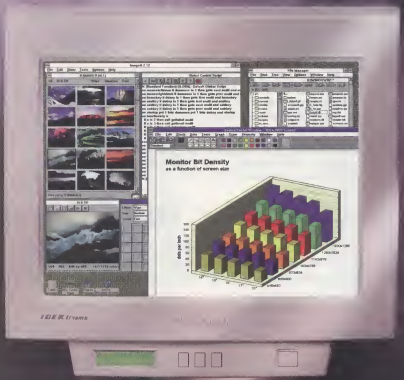
Awesome monitor. Killer price.



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SNAPSHOT INSTANT RECURSIVE SWITCH

Search and Destroy: What would you rather do, retype the same command over and over or opt for **REPEAT.COM** or SWEEP.BAT? Hint: We've boldfaced the right answer. By typing in the DEBUG script on the previous page and compiling it, you'll be able to run your commands everywhere, just as though they came with their own /S switch.

```
G:\>del \dos\*.tmp

G:\>del \windows\*.tmp

G:\>del \windows\system\*.tmp

G:\>del \winword\*.tmp

G:\>del \winword\doc\*.tmp


G:\>repeat del *.tmp
```

Line 6 appends an EXIT command to the end of the list. Line 7 is where the action occurs. It executes another copy of COMMAND.COM and, using an input redirection operator, instructs COMMAND.COM to take its commands from CMDLIST.TXT. Every line in CMDLIST.TXT that begins with Directory becomes a command that executes DIRECTOR.BAT. (DOS ignores the y at the end of Directory because command names are limited to eight characters. Clever, no?) As a result, the secondary copy of COMMAND.COM executes DIRECTOR.BAT once for every directory on the disk. DIRECTOR.BAT, in turn, changes to the corresponding directory (the C:\DOS in Directory of C:\DOS becomes %2 when DIRECTOR.BAT is executed), and executes the command you typed after SWEEP. It's convoluted, but it works.

Come Again? The trouble with batch files is that they're slow. They'll do when you don't have a real program to do the job, but why settle for less than a full-fledged DEBUG script? The script in "Re-create Our Recursive Utility," page 224, creates a stand-alone utility named REPEAT.COM that works like SWEEP, only better. Type it into your text editor and save it as REPEAT.SCR. Then type DEBUG<REPEAT.SCR to create it.

To delete all the TMP files from the default drive, type REPEAT DEL *.TMP. Note: If you attempt to reference a file that doesn't exist in every directory, you'll see a "File not found" message for every failed match. It's not really an error, just a notification that there were no TMP files in some directories.

REPEAT is a machine language program that I wrote with the Microsoft Macro Assembler. It avoids all of the overhead associated with a batch file. Better still, it works on *any* PC that runs DOS 3.0 or later, and it doesn't rely on hard-coded filenames like C:\DOS\DIRECTOR.BAT. It's a general-purpose tool that you don't need to adapt to individual PCs.

If REPEAT displays the error message "Cannot find COMMAND.COM," check your COMSPEC environment variable. Either it doesn't exist, or it points to a copy of COMMAND.COM that's no longer there. Another possible error message is "Insufficient memory." REPEAT requires about 64K of free memory, and it terminates with this message if there is less than that amount available.

These two solutions just go to show you that you should never give in to DOS's shortcomings. JEFF PROSISE

JEFF PROSISE *is not only your DOS guru, he's also the author of* Windows Desktop Utilities *(ZD Press, 1994).*

PC Contact XTREE REBORN

4FILES
Down because XTree is dead? Try 4FILES, an XTree-like file-management utility. Copy, move, delete, rename, and even annotate directories and files. The 4FILES utility works well with COMMAND.COM replacements such as the NDOS that comes with Symantec's Norton Utilities. You can even use it as a compression front end. Download 4FILES.ZIP from PC Contact's data library 3 (Utilities/Misc.). See page 250 for information on ordering the disk from Public Brand Software.

DOS TIPS

SUB-SUB-SUBDIRECTORY

Problem: *Creating several nested subdirectories requires typing the MD command over and over.*

Solution: Here's XMD, the Extended Make Directory command that eliminates the need for repeating MD. To create XMD, type the following DEBUG script into your text editor and save it as XMD.SCR:

```
N XMD.COM
E 0100 FC BE 81 00 AC 3C 20 74
E 0108 FB 3C 2C 74 F7 4E 3C 0D
E 0110 75 0C BA 85 01 B4 09 CD
E 0118 21 B8 01 4C CD 21 56 AC
E 0120 3C 20 74 08 3C 2C 74 04
E 0128 3C 0D 75 F3 4E C6 04 5C
E 0130 8B DE C6 44 01 00 5E 56
E 0138 80 3C 5C 75 04 46 EB 12
E 0140 90 46 80 3C 3A 75 0A 46
E 0148 80 3C 5C 75 05 46 EB 02
E 0150 90 4E AC 3C 00 74 28 3C
E 0158 5C 75 F7 4E C6 04 00 8B
E 0160 CE 5E 51 B4 39 8B D6 CD
E 0168 21 73 0A 59 3B CB 75 06
E 0170 BA A0 01 EB A0 59 56 8B
E 0178 F1 C6 04 5C 46 EB D3 5E
E 0180 B8 00 4C CD 21 53 79 6E
E 0188 74 61 78 3A 20 58 4D 44
E 0190 20 5B 64 72 69 76 65 3A
E 0198 5D 70 61 74 68 0D 0A 24
E 01A0 55 6E 61 62 6C 65 20 74
E 01A8 6F 20 63 72 65 61 74 65
E 01B0 20 64 69 72 65 63 74 6F
E 01B8 72 79 0D 0A 24
R CX
BD
W
Q
```

Type DEBUG<XMD.SCR to create XMD.COM. To create the directory structure C:\DATA\93-94\PAYROLL, for example, type XMD \DATA\93-94\PAYROLL.

ROGER W. SAUER
FAIRFIELD, CALIFORNIA

TIME'S UPDATE

Problem: *You need to update the date/time stamp on all of the files in a directory.*

Solution: Create the following batch file and name it UPDATALL.BAT:

```
@ECHO OFF
FOR %%A IN (*.*) DO COPY /B
%%A +, > NUL
```

To use it, just type UPDATALL

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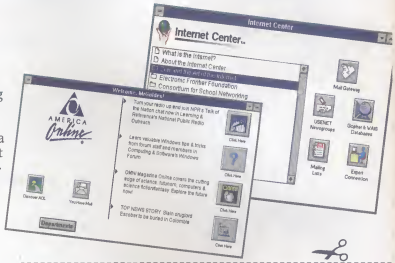

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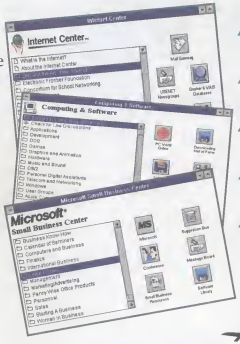

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3971/W

in the directory that contains the files you wish to update.

Saul P. Morse
Orlando, Florida

COUNT DIRECTORIES

Problem: *There's too much junk on your hard disk. You'd like to find out at a glance how many directories you have.*

Solution: Using your favorite text editor, create DIRNUM.BAT and place it in a directory that's in your Path statement:

```
@ECHO OFF
ECHO Checking number of ↵
↳directories ...
CHKDSK | FIND *dir*
```

You can run DIRNUM on any hard disk or floppy disk, but it won't work at all on a network drive.

Saul P. Morse
Orlando, Florida

GETTING ANSI

Problem: *Batch files often require ANSI.SYS to be loaded.*

Solution: Create a small utility to determine whether ANSI.SYS is available, and use it in your batch file. Type the following DEBUG script in your text editor and save it as ANSITEST.SCR:

```
N ANSITEST.COM
E100 B8 00 1A CD 2F FE C0 B4
E108 4C CD 21
RCX
B
W
Q
```

Type DEBUG<ANSITEST.SCR to create ANSITEST.COM. This utility returns an ERRORLEVEL 0 if ANSI.SYS is active, and ERRORLEVEL 1 if it's not running. Here's an example of a batch file utilizing ANSITEST:

```
@ECHO OFF
ANSITEST
IF ERRORLEVEL 1 GOTO INACTIVE
ECHO ANSI.SYS ACTIVE
GOTO END
:INACTIVE
ECHO You must load ANSI.SYS first
:END
```

Lee A. Floyd
Morrow, Georgia

DOUBLESPACE BOOST

Problem: *The old bottleneck, your hard disk, is working even slower since you've compressed it with DoubleSpace.*

Solution: Configure DoubleSpace to take advantage of your 386 or 486 processor's capabilities. To locate the uncompressed drive containing the compressed file DBLSPACE.000, type DBLSPACE/INFO. Go to the root directory of that drive and type:

```
ATTRIB -H -R -S DBLSPACE.INI
```

Then type EDIT DBLSPACE.INI, and add the following line:

```
Enable386=1
```

Save, exit, and at the prompt type:

```
ATTRIB +H +R +S DBLSPACE.INI
```

Reboot for the changes to take effect. The speed improvement won't be dramatic, but every little bit helps.

Aaron Sethman
Bentleyville, Pennsylvania

CLEVER BACKUP

Problem: *You don't want to back up your system daily, only when there are enough new files on the hard disk.*

Solution: Create a batch file to count all new files, based on the Archive bit, set at the time of the BACKUP or XCOPY commands. Name the batch file NEWBAKS.BAT.

```
@ECHO OFF
CLS
REM NOTE: IN THE NEXT LINE, ↵
↳TYPE AN EXTRA SPACE AT THE ↵
↳END.
CHOICE/C:YN Do you want to count↵
↳files that need to be backed up
IF ERRORLEVEL 2 GOTO END
IF ERRORLEVEL 1 GOTO DOIT
:DOIT
CLS
ECHO COUNTING....
DIR C:\*.* /AA /S>BU
TYPE BU|FIND /C '.'>>BU
ECHO new files to backup>>BU
CLS
ECHO There are
TYPE BU
PAUSE
:END
```

Save NEWBAKS.BAT in a directory that's in your Path statement, and add the line CALL NEWBAKS to your AUTOEXEC.BAT file following the PATH line. Note: This batch file works only in DOS 6.x.

Randy Christiansen
Stansbury Park, Utah

STARRY-EYED EDIT

Problem: *EDIT always defaults to *.TXT when you select File, Open.*

Solution: Before you start, make a copy of QBASIC.EXE, to be safe. Then rename QBASIC.EXE to QBASIC.BIN and type DEBUG QBASIC.BIN to start DEBUG and load QBASIC.BIN. Type R DS to display the value in register DS and add 2000 (hex). For example, if DS equals 0DAA, the value you want is 2DAA. Type E *xxxx*:DD70 '*.*',0 where *xxxx* is a value computed by adding 2000 to register DS. Type W, press Enter, type Q, and press Enter to save the edited file and quit DEBUG. Then rename QBASIC.BIN to QBASIC.EXE. This procedure applies only to MS-DOS 6.x.

Jeff Prosise
Contributing Editor

HOT TIP SKIP TWO DIRECTORIES

Problem: There's no quick way to "skip up" two or more directory levels.

Solution: You can type CD.. to move up one level, but two levels require two separate commands. Novell NetWare users are familiar with CD... or CD.... for quick tree navigation, but DOS doesn't provide that shortcut. Create a DOSKEY macro to do that by adding the following lines to your AUTOEXEC.BAT or macro batch file:

```
DOSKEY CD...=CD..$TCD..
DOSKEY CD....=CD..$TCD↵
↳..$TCD..
```

To use these macros, type CD... to skip up two levels, or CD.... for three levels.

KEN JOHNSON
OAK PARK, ILLINOIS

OPERATE YOUR PC FROM A REMOTE SITE

The Next Best Thing to Telekinesis

You planned it well. You really did. You took a disk home with all the files you needed in order to finish that nagging project at home over the weekend. It's Saturday afternoon and you start working, when you realize that a crucial file is missing. And the office is 55 miles away. You knew the day would come when you would get to use the remote access software the MIS people had you install. You launch the program and as you listen to the modem's dial tone, you think to yourself that technology is great and life is beautiful. But alas, you don't make the connection. Hmm. That's odd. You double-check the number, change the configuration, and retry. No connection. And then it hits you: Your office PC is not on!

Remote access software is a splendid idea, but its main drawback is that you need to leave the host system on at all times, which is bad for the environment and not so pleasant for your checkbook, either. Also, security-wise, it may not be advisable to leave a system on in your absence, as prying co-workers may be able to read your e-mail and access your files. Fortunately, there's a solution. Server Technology's Remote Power On/Off +Aux is a device that sits between your PC and the phone line, and wakes up your system when you dial in. If your modem shares a line with an answering machine or fax, there's an auxiliary port that detects the incoming call and routes it to the appropriate device. A utility called Listen, sold separately, speeds the boot-up process.

Now that you're finally connected, keep some guidelines in mind:

• Light use. Tempting as this may sound, don't use the remote system for regular operations, such as running the accounting program, managing records in a database, or crunching numbers. You'll find yourself twiddling your thumbs, waiting for things to happen. Remote access software is best used for downloading files, checking messages, and similar tasks.

• Use DOS. A GUI environment such as Windows can slow you down. If the operation you're attempting (such as downloading files) can be done from a DOS prompt, it'll go faster. Look for remote access programs that support both DOS and Windows. For example, Symantec's Norton pcAnywhere for Windows lets you choose from among such connections as Windows to Windows, Windows to DOS, and so on.

• No saver. Before you leave the office, turn off the screen saver on your host system. Some remote access programs won't let you deactivate screen savers.

• Local e-mail. Running your e-mail software from your local system will reduce your connect time. This way, you'll only need to load your data files (that is, the messages themselves) while online.

• Auto-activate. Obviously, if you're using a remote power-on device, you'll need to add a line to your AUTOEXEC.BAT file to activate the remote access software at boot-up.

• Practice passwords religiously. A remote access setup (especially with the remote power-on option) makes your system vulnerable to anyone with a modem.

• Fast modems. For the best overall results, get the fastest modems you can find. Look for a modem with a Data Terminal Equipment (DTE) rate that exceeds 57.6Kbps on 14.4Kbps modems and 115.2Kbps on V.34 class units. **YAEL LI-RON**

Remote Power On/Off +Aux / Server Technology / (800) 835-1515 / $169.95 / *Reader Service No. 687*
The Listen utility ($15.95) is not sold in stores. It may be purchased by calling Server Technology directly.
For the uninitiated, here are some suggestions for remote access programs:
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Carbon Copy / Microcom / (800) 822-8224 / (617) 551-1000 / $199 / *Reader Service No. 689*
ReachOut Remote Control Pro / Ocean Isle Software / (800) 677-6232 / $199 / *Reader Service No. 690*

TIPS WORD PROCESSORS

WORDPERFECT 6.0

Problem: *You want to see what's in a ZIPped file.*

Solution: Select File, Open, single-click on any ZIP file, and select View. The Viewer window will display the contents of the ZIP file, as if you've typed PKUNZIP *filename* -V at the DOS prompt.

RON WHITE
SENIOR CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

WORDPERFECT 5.1 FOR DOS

Problem: *You want each page of a document to have the same border.*

Solution: Place a border in your header. Create a header by pressing Shift-F8 and selecting Page, Header A, Every Page. Insert an empty figure box by pressing Alt-F9 and selecting Figure, Create. Now set the "Wrap Text Around Box" option to No. Select Size, Set Both, and specify 6.5 by 8 (or whatever size you want). If you want the border to be larger than the default 1-inch margins allow, set your margin codes before you insert this figure box. Press F7 once to exit the Figure Box menu, and twice more to exit the Format menu. You will not see the box unless you preview the document. If you want the border to look like something other than a single thin line, set the Figure Options before you create the box (Alt-F9, Figure, Options).

JUDY HOUSMAN
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

Problem: *You've created a table box, and now you need to change it to a figure box.*

Solution: This can be a headache if your box options are set for a figure box. To change the box type, edit the table box by

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pressing Alt-F9 and selecting Table, Edit, and typing the box number. When in the Table Box menu, press Alt-F9 again and select Figure.

NORMA AIELLO
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

Problem: *Whether you like it or not, tables always get a double border, and you constantly have to change them to your preferred border style.*

Solution: Set a default border as follows: Press Shift-F1, and select Initial Settings, Initial Codes. In the Initial Codes screen, press Shift-F8, select Other, Border Options, Double. Press Enter on Width and Shading, and type 0 for Spacing Between. Press F7 twice to exit the Setup menu. Next time you create a table, it will display with a double border, but when you preview or print it, the line will be single. Note that this default will apply to graphic boxes as well, so if you use double borders for figure boxes, you'll need to change the border type manually each time.

NORMA AIELLO
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

MICROSOFT WORD 6.0

Problem: *You want to open a document as soon as you load Word for Windows.*

Solution: This macro presents you with three options at startup: Open last used, open any file, or create a new file. To create the macro select Tools, Macro, type AutoExec for the macro name, and select create. Type the following lines between the Sub MAIN and End Sub lines, and press Ctrl-W to save it:

```
Sub MAIN
Begin Dialog UserDialog 320, ↵
↳144, "Startup Options "
PushButton 53, 21, 250, 21, ↵
↳"Open " + FileNameInfo$(File ↵
↳Name$(1), 3)
PushButton 53, 55, 250, 21, ↵
↳"Open Another Document"
PushButton 53, 93, 250, 21, ↵
↳"Create a New Document"
End Dialog
Dim MyDialog As UserDialog
Button = Dialog(MyDialog)
Select Case Button
Case 1
File1
Case 2
Dim fo As FileOpen
GetCurValues fo
fo.Name = "*.*"
On Error Goto UserClickedCancel
Dialog fo
On Error Goto 0
FileOpen fo
ViewZoomPageWidth
UserClickedCancel:
Case 3
FileNewDefault
Case Else
End Select
End Sub
```

Because this is an AutoExec macro, it will auto-execute as soon as you launch Word.

WOODY LEONHARD
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

TIPS SPREADSHEETS

MICROSOFT EXCEL 5

Problem: *You need an efficient data entry method that includes a validation tool.*

Solution: Use the Excel custom controls to create a spinner button, as follows: Right-click on the toolbar and select Forms. From the floating Forms toolbar, click on the spinner button (it looks like a double-edged arrow). Next to the cell that holds the data entry you wish to control, drag and draw a vertical rectangle to place the spinner button. Right-click on the button and select Format Object, then click on the Controls tab. Set the minimum, maximum, and increments for the cell's value, and type the cell's address in the Cell Link box. Click on the Properties tab and select Move and size with cells. Whenever you click on the up or down arrow of the spinner button, the linked cell's value will change according to the increment you specified in Controls.

RICK DOBSON
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

Problem: *You want to sum cells in a range, but only if they meet your criteria.*

Solution: The SUMIF function computes sums of records in a list or database that meet specified criteria. Suppose you have an Excel spreadsheet listing the names and annual salaries of your department's 180 employees in the range A2:B181. To compute the aggregate annual compensation paid to employees making more than $50,000 annually, you need a formula that adds only the amounts in column B that exceed $50,000. The following formula computes the desired result:

```
SUMIF(B2:B181,">50000").
```

You may want to specify criteria in a field other than the value field. If, for instance, column C contained job description codes, you could compute total annual compensation for all employees in job classification 103 with the following formula:

```
SUMIF(C2:C181,103,B2:B181)
```

The first argument tells Excel to search column C for the value specified in the second argument. The optional third argument tells Excel where to find the values to include in the computed total. If your criterion is

HOT TIP WORD FOR WINDOWS

Problem: You can only insert one row at a time in a Word 6.0 for Windows table.

Solution: If you block a specific number of rows and select Insert Rows from the Table menu, you'll insert the same number of rows you have blocked. But here's a more elegant solution: Write a macro to prompt you for the number of rows you wish to insert. To create the macro, select Tools, Macro, type InsertTableRows for the name, and select Create. Type the following lines between the Sub MAIN and End Sub lines, and press Ctrl-W to save:

```
Sub MAIN
row$ = InputBox$("Number of ↵
↳Rows to Add:", "Add Rows")
TableInsertRow .NumRows =↵
↳row$
End Sub
```

CHRIS SANDLUND
ASSOCIATE EDITOR

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a text value or includes a comparison operator, such as > or =, enclose the criteria description in quotes, or Excel will not accept the formula.

RALPH SOUCIE
JONESPORT, MAINE

Problem: *There's no obvious way to move columns in a table without using a mouse.*

Solution: This tip is very useful for users of portable computers. Tab over to the column you wish to move. Press Ctrl-space bar to select the entire column, and press Ctrl-F8. Notice that the word MOV appears on the status bar. Use the arrow keys to move the column to a new location. When you're finished, press Esc to turn off MOV mode.

SHANE DEVENSHIRE
WALNUT CREEK

QUATTRO PRO 5.0 FOR WINDOWS

Problem: *You need to print several non-contiguous blocks.*

Solution: When you specify the print block, separate the different blocks with commas. For example: A:C5..F25,M:D2..F12. If you've named your sheets and/or blocks, refer to these names in that statement. If you're not sure what the blocks are, you can use the point-and-click method by blocking the first print block, then Ctrl-blocking each additional block. You'll need to preblock before going to the Print menu.

NORMA AIELLO
SANTA FE, NEW MEXICO

TIPS DATABASES

MICROSOFT ACCESS 2.0

Problem: *You need a stopwatch function for timing activities.*

Solution: Create a form with two command buttons in the Detail Section—one called Start, the other, Finish. These buttons can be created by dragging and dropping the Command Button object from the Toolbox. Make sure you have two fields in your table called Display and Seconds. Display is a Long Time Field that displays the start and finish time. Seconds is an Integer Field that displays the total time of an event. Next, select Design, Form, View and add an Event Procedure to the Start button by following these steps:

Right-click on the command button and select Properties. Right-click on Event Procedure, and select Build. Then just type the following lines between the Sub and End Sub statements:

```
Time = "0:00:00"
Display = Time
```

To create the Finish button, add an Event Procedure by typing the following lines between Sub and End Sub:

```
Display = Time
Seconds = (3600 * Hour(Display))
+(60 * Minute(Display)) +
Second(Display)
```

JUDY JONG
SAN FRANCISCO, CALIFORNIA

BORLAND DBASE IV

Problem: *You want users of your programs to be shielded from dBASE IV's cryptic error messages.*

Solution: Create an error procedure that you control with the ON ERROR command. The ErrorScr procedure shown below not only displays information pertaining to the error, but does some cleanup and plays a familiar "error tune" as well ("Taps"). The command

```
ON ERROR DO ErrorScr WITH
PROGRAM(),LINENO()
```

identifies ErrorScr as the procedure to perform in case of error. Passed as parameters, PROGRAM() and LINENO() will return the name and line number of the calling program, rather than the error procedure itself.

```
PROCEDURE ErrorScr
PARAMETERS err_p,err_l
SET TALK OFF
ON KEY
CLOSE DATABASES
CLEAR TYPEAHEAD
SET DEVICE TO SCREEN
SET CONSOLE ON
SET CURSOR ON
DEFINE WINDOW ErrorWin ;
FROM 6,14 TO 18,64 NONE
COLOR W+/R
ACTIVATE WINDOW ErrorWin
@ 0,16 SAY "E R R O R T R A P"
@ 1,16 SAY "- - - - - - - - -"
@ 3, 1 SAY "An error has occurred."
+;
" Please contact the system"
@ 4, 1 SAY "administrator and
report" +;
" the following:"
@ 6, 1 SAY "ERROR#: " +
LTRIM(STR(ERROR()))
@ 7, 1 SAY "MESSAGE: " +
LEFT(MESSAGE(),41)
@ 8, 1 SAY "PROGRAM: " + err_p
@ 9, 1 SAY "LINE#: " +
LTRIM(STR(err_l))
SET BELL ON
SET BELL TO 500,8
?? CHR(7)
SET BELL TO 720,6
?? CHR(7)
SET BELL TO 900,8
?? CHR(7)
SET BELL TO
@12,12 SAY "Press a key to
continue..."
?? INKEY(0)
DEACTIVATE WINDOW ErrorWin
RETURN TO MASTER
```

ROGER W. SAUER
FAIRFIELD, CALIFORNIA

HOT TIP MICROSOFT EXCEL 5

Problem: Dollar signs don't align properly when you use the Currency format.

Solution: Instead of using a regular Currency format, apply one of the Accounting formats. Block the range you wish to format, right click and select Format. Select Accounting, and choose the first or third Accounting formats. Alternatively, if you wish to add double underlines, extended underlines, or other effects, select the Accounting Autoformat, as follows: Select Format, Autoformat, and select one from those labeled "Accounting 1" through "Accounting 4."

RALPH SOUCIE
JONESPORT, MAINE

TIPS REMOTE CONTROL

CENTRAL POINT COMMUTE

Problem: *You want a faster way to dial in and take control.*

Solution: Set up the host (or hosts) you want to control with the Call in and take control option. Then create a batch file to activate Commute for each. For example, say your list includes Chicago. Write a batch file called CHICAGO.BAT that includes the following lines:

```
@ECHO OFF
COMMUTE CHICAGO
```

The advantage of this method is that you don't have to go through the Commute menus. Just type CHICAGO at the DOS prompt and you will dial the correct number.

SHERRY GORDON
FLAGSTAFF, ARIZONA

NORTON-LAMBERT CLOSE-UP

Problem: *Close-Up takes up too much memory when you run it.*

Solution: It's relatively simple to trim Close-Up's requirements. Run the CHOST command with the SMALL BUFFERS=S parameter. That pushes you from a default of about 81K down to about 47K. If you want to run CHOST with a memory manager, you need to reduce its disk size before you load it. Just type CHOST EXTRACT SMALL in the Close-Up directory, and you'll produce a version of CHOST called CHOSTS.EXE that's about 55K (compared to the default of about 260K).

JEF RAND
SAN MATEO, CALIFORNIA

Problem: *Switching between the host's DOS prompt and yours confuses you.*

Solution: Set the prompts to identify the systems. At each prompt, type PROMPT OFFICE SYSTEM$_$p$g and PROMPT MY SYSTEM$_pg for Host and Local, respectively.

SHERRY GORDON
FLAGSTAFF, ARIZONA

CARBON COPY FOR WINDOWS

Problem: *Using Microcom Carbon Copy for Windows via remote access is too slow.*

Solution: Here are four things to do to make it faster. First, remove the Wallpaper from the host by selecting Main, Control Panel, Desktop. Wallpaper is a bitmap and takes a long time to download. Second, minimize your use of colors—these also take a long time to transfer. Configure the host computer to use a 16-color driver in Windows. Third, don't use any screen savers on the host PC—they use valuable Windows resources and CPU processing time. Finally, reduce the number of open groups to only those you need to access; that way, Carbon Copy for Windows does not need to transmit superfluous information. By the way, these four tips work with any remote access product.

SHERRY GORDON
FLAGSTAFF, ARIZONA

HOT TIP COMMUTE

Problem: Central Point Commute initializes the modem, but shortly thereafter gives "Modem Error 254."

Solution: This problem could occur if the COMMUTE.CFG file is corrupt or an incorrect COM port, baud rate, or modem initialization string has been selected. From the Configure menu, verify the COM port, baud rate, and modem selected. Then rename the COMMUTE.CFG file, run Commute, and reconfigure the program. If neither of these works, add the following to your initialization string: E0V0. E0 turns off local echo, V0 sends modem responses as numbers, not letters.

JOHN TASCHEK
ASSOCIATE TECHNICAL EDITOR

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Help APPLICATION TIPS: Run pcAnywhere with Windows for Workgroups • Lighten LapLink's Load

SYMANTEC NORTON PCANYWHERE

Problem: *You're trying to use pcAnywhere with an external modem, but you get erratic results.*

Solution: Assuming that it's a supported modem, you could be having cable problems. Norton pcAnywhere is harder on modems and cables than other programs are, so there are a couple of things to look at. Be sure that you are not using any 9- to 25-pin adapters on the cable because they won't pass enough lines through for pcAnywhere to work properly.

SYMANTEC
PRODUCT SUPPORT

Problem: *You want to run pcAnywhere with Windows for Workgroups.*

Solution: Technically, it's not supported—some of the 32-bit VxDs cause problems. But of course it's possible: You will need the Windows for Workgroups DOS client software from Microsoft. Next, load pcAnywhere, then load the DOS client software, and you'll have a link to the network before you enter Windows for Workgroups.

SYMANTEC
PRODUCT SUPPORT

Problem: *Symantec's Norton pcAnywhere locks up.*

Solution: So do a lot of programs. However, you might be running out of resources. Edit CONFIG.SYS and make sure that FILES=50 and BUFFERS=30,*n* where *n* is not zero. Also make sure that your COMMAND.COM line has the /E:1024 parameter (at least). You may also want to try reducing the size of the disk cache to see whether that helps—change the SMARTDRV line in AUTOEXEC.BAT to use less memory (change 2048 to 1024, for example). Finally, be sure that you have a TEMP= statement in AUTOEXEC.BAT and that it points to a valid directory on a drive that is noncompressed.

DAN DOHAN
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

TRAVELING SOFTWARE LAPLINK

Problem: *LapLink Remote Access's TSRs take up too much memory.*

Solution: First load them high. Instead of calling LLRA.BAT, create a batch file with the following lines:

```
LH C:\COMMWORK\LLRA\LLRA1.EXE
LH C:\COMMWORK\LLRA\LLRA2.EXE
LH C:\COMMWORK\LLRA\LLRA3.EXE
```

If you're not using a modem, or if your modem has built-in compression, don't bother to load LLRA4.EXE, the compression module. You'll save about 20K of memory. Just so you know, modems that have V.42bis, MNP 5, and MNP 7 all have built-in compression.

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TECHNICAL SUPPORT

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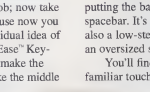

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PC MAGAZINE EDITORS' CHOICE
November 26, 1990
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CHOOSE, BUY, AND INSTALL

Take Mom's Advice: Never Pay Retail

Your new server just arrived. Sleek. Fast. Fully loaded. A gorgeous machine. In fact, you're standing in your office admiring it when the boss comes in wearing that now-familiar smile. The smile that says, "I'm about to make your life miserable." Since becoming network manager, you've moved from obscurity to P.T. Barnum–class notoriety. "How's the installation going?" the boss inquires. "You mean this thing didn't come with everything?" you think. "Great," you reply with Tony-the-Tiger enthusiasm. "That's GREAT." Big grin. "Keep me posted. Oh, and keep up the good work." Keep it up? It's time to start it.

All you need to do is choose a network operating system (NOS), buy it, and install it. In three days. But things aren't that bad. Just follow our advice and you'll wind up with the NOS that suits your needs. Here's how we chose NetWare.

Whaddaya Want? NOSs fall into two general categories: server and peer-to-peer. NetWare is an example of the former, and Artisoft's LANtastic is an example of the latter. Which one you choose depends on how your office is organized.

Peer NOSs enable every system on the network to be either a server or a client. (Servers offer their disk drives, printers, and so on to clients.) Peer NOSs make it easy to pull a file off your co-worker's PC next door or to output to that PostScript printer down the hall. This flexibility makes it easy to create and tear down impromptu workgroups. In addition, because they don't require a dedicated machine, they offer an inexpensive way to connect systems. In fact, if you have only five or ten systems to network, a peer NOS is almost definitely what you want.

The chief drawback of peer NOSs is that they are very decentralized, making them hard to manage. Each user needs to have a decent understanding of what a network is and what the different systems on your network can do. Plus, if you need to use the printer that's connected to Bob's machine, and Bob has turned off his system and locked his office, you're out of luck.

My cohorts and I have looked at several peer NOSs: Artisoft's LANtastic, Microsoft's Windows for Workgroups, Performance Technology's PowerLan, and Novell's Personal NetWare. All had features to recommend them, but we wound up keeping Windows for Workgroups on our LAN. It has some drawbacks—we got a bit confused trying to install more than two network protocols on it—but its wonderful high-performance file system makes up for its shortcomings.

Server NOSs (also called client-server NOSs) dedicate specific systems to offer up their resources. Once you've made a system into a server, it can't act as a client—it lives only to serve. The great advantage of this system is that it's easy to manage: You know that you don't turn your server off, so all of its resources are available. You also know that you back up all the data on the server regularly, so it's all protected. And your users don't have to know about your network—most of the intricacies will be handled by the LAN administrator.

Of course, nothing is perfect. You must dedicate systems to act as servers, and you'll need at least one person who is an expert with the NOS you choose to act as the network administrator.

We installed and worked with several server NOSs: Banyan's Vines, Microsoft's Windows NT Advanced Server, and Novell's NetWare 3.12 and 4.01. All suited our needs, but after examining our existing NetWare server, we realized that we had one custom application that wouldn't run under any other NOS, so it was easy to make a quick decision: NetWare it had to be.

The choice between NetWare 3.12 and NetWare 4.01 was simple for me: With only one server, there was no reason for the more powerful (and more complicated) NetWare 4.01. If we had five or six servers, we would have more seriously considered the more expensive, more powerful sibling.

Shop Till You Drop Armed with a list of direct-mail vendors that sell NetWare, we went to the phones and made some inquiries. This was an eye-opener. For example: List price for a 50-user NetWare 3.12 box is $4,995 whether you buy it on CD-ROM or 3.5-inch floppy disks. After some phone calls, we got prices as low as $2,449. That's $2,546 below list.

In addition, some NetWare resellers were pricing the CD-ROM version differently from the 3.5-inch floppy disk version.

BEST BUY BETTER **SHOP AROUND**

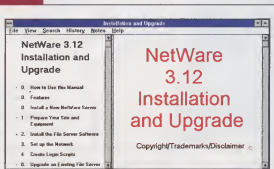
License Type	Highest Advertised Price	Highest Actual Price	Lowest Advertised Price	Lowest Actual Price
50 Users	$3,870	$2,799	$2,465	$2,449
100 Users	$5,550	$3,899	$3,479	$3,539

Watch Your Wallet: NetWare 3.12 prices vary dramatically. If you buy from your corner store, you could wind up paying too much. We called four major NetWare resellers for pricing information, and none of the prices they gave us matched the prices they were advertising.

WORKAROUND

NETWARE SPORTS A **NEW LOOK**

Better Help: When you get NetWare 3.12 on CD, you don't get 23 pounds of manuals—you get ElectroText. Even before you get your server up and running, you can put your CD into any Windows workstation and run ET.EXE.



There seemed to be no pattern to whether it was more or less expensive, but it was almost always a different price.

We ordered the NetWare CD-ROM from the lowball vendor and it arrived two days later. It was a small box. Much smaller than we expected. In fact, we expected it to be followed by several other, larger boxes. But it contained only the CD, one 3.5-inch floppy disk, and a couple of manuals. Thin manuals. Everything but the server installation came online.

Installation I won't spend a lot of time walking through the NetWare server installation—that's what the manual is for. That well-crafted, brilliant piece of expository writing, the *Novell NetWare 3.12 Installation and Upgrade Manual*. Bulwer-Lytton couldn't hold a candle to these pages. Despite its occasionally confusing syntax, however, the manual gives you more than enough information to install NetWare or migrate from one version to another.

Except when it's dead wrong, that is. Look on page 20, where step five proudly says, "Change to the drive letter corresponding to the CD-ROM and type INSTALL <Enter>." OK, got a firm picture of that? Now picture this: "Bad command or file name." INSTALL.EXE lives in the NETWARE.312\ENGLISH directory, not on the root directory of the CD-ROM.

Now you're on a roll. Except that you don't have any of the device drivers for your server's peripherals, do you? No disk drive driver, no SCSI adapter driver, no CD-ROM driver, no Ethernet card driver. Nada, nothing, zip. CompuServe time.

Fortunately, most server vendors put their drivers in their CompuServe forums. We were ever-grateful to Compaq for anticipating our needs and putting all the drivers for our awesome, brand-new Compaq ProLiant into one easy-to-find ZIP file. The rest of the installation was very straightforward.

The Changes NetWare 3.12 changes the default frame type from NetWare 3.11's Ethernet 802.3 standard to 802.2. Basically, these two frame types are like dialects of the same language—they're similar ways of pushing data onto and off of a network, but they use a slightly different grammar.

Edit your AUTOEXEC.NCF file and add a line to load your network driver with the 802.3 frame type. For the ProLiant with its NetFlex cards, we added the lines:

```
load CPQETHER slot=2 frame=
ETHERNET_802.3
bind IPX to CPQETHER [slot=2 frame=
ETHERNET_802.3 ] net=3
```

These two lines reload the Compaq Ethernet driver (in NetWare lingo, we use the module re-entrantly), and bind the IPX protocol to it so it can "speak" NetWare. Next time: Clients. JOHN MONTGOMERY

PC Contact | CLEAN HOUSE

MPURGE

This NetWare Loadable Module locates network files you don't need any more, then backs them up or even removes them automatically. You give it the search criteria—filenames and ages, for example—and it hunts down the files. Download MPURGE.ZIP from PC Contact's data library 3 (Utilities/Misc.) or see page 250 to order a disk from Public Brand Software.

NET TIPS

NOVELL NETWARE 3.1X

Problem: *You want to boost the performance of your NetWare-based database server.*

Solution: One of the simplest ways to get a performance boost is to purchase faster hardware. Database servers capitalize on faster CPUs and more memory. Short of purchasing new hardware, however, here are some software tips to boost database engine performance. First, if your database can use either the NetWare file system or the Direct File System, choose the latter. Second, load the MONITOR NLM and watch the LSL Receive Buffers. By default, NetWare allocates 10 LSL Receive Buffers, allowing up to 10 packets to be processed at once. After 10 packets, NetWare starts to discard them, and performance degrades. If you see that your LSL Receive Buffers are usually in full use, increase the default amount by adding the line

```
SET Minimum Packet Receive
Buffers=20 to STARTUP.NCF
```

and restart the server. If you're still using all of your LSL Receive Buffers, increase this number further. Third, use Packet Burst mode (load PBURST.NLM on the server and make sure your clients have the latest software). And finally, if you're already running TCP/IP on your clients, you may get better performance by loading TCP/IP on your server and using it as your default protocol.

ROBERT DOBBS
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Problem: *You're trying to upgrade your office's client software to the current VLMs, but you don't know which workstations have them installed and which don't.*

Solution: Because VLMs report their shell type as V4.00, you can use the SHELL_TYPE variable in the system

login script to notify clients to contact you for an upgrade. From the SYSCON utility, select Supervisor Options, System Login, and add the lines:

```
IF SHELL_TYPE < '4.00' THEN
BEGIN
  FIRE PHASERS
  WRITE "Contact your network
  administrator so you can"
  WRITE 'get the upgrade to the
  latest client software."
  PAUSE
END
```

RODNEY LISTER
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS

Problem: *You just installed several new NLMs and as a result your server performance is dropping.*

Solution: Chances are you've either run out of memory or one of these NLMs is not releasing the CPU. First, determine how well your NLMs are multitasking by checking to see if they are relinquishing control of the CPU. Load INSTALL.NLM from the server console and edit the AUTOEXEC.NCF file. At the end, add the line:

```
SET Display Relinquish Control
Alerts = ON
```

This tells the server to send a message to the console whenever an NLM holds the CPU for more than 0.4 seconds. You may be surprised at how many NLMs aren't good multitasking neighbors. Although you may still need to load an offending NLM, you'll know it degrades performance and will load it only when absolutely necessary.

If you're seeing poor multitasking, some NLMs may have exhausted your server's memory. Load MONITOR NLM and look at the Resource Utilization screen. If you see your memory running low, you should either unload some NLMs or reboot the server.

DAN DOHAN
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

Problem: *Your Windows client gets the message, "The NETWARE.DLL file cannot be located."*

Solution: This probably means you have incompatible versions of IPX.COM and NETX.COM running on your workstation. Exit Windows, change to the directory that holds IPX and NETX, and type IPX/I, then NETX/I. The first command should yield at least Version 3.1, and the second at least Version 3.26. If your NETX is Version 3.22, you need to upgrade to do away with this error message.

RANDY KENNEDY
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Problem: *You just upgraded to Windows for Workgroups 3.11 and now you get the error message, "No Response From File Server."*

Solution: If you're running it on a Token Ring network, the problem is probably that Windows for Workgroups loads ROUTE.COM in your AUTOEXEC.BAT. Chances are that your server doesn't support source routing. Remove this line and you'll be up and running.

RANDY KENNEDY
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

ARTISOFT LANTASTIC 6.0

Problem: *Windows locks as it loads on a LANtastic server.*

Solution: What's probably happening is that one of the server's drives is also mapped to a network drive. Like so many other things, this causes Windows to lock. If you really want all of the machines to access a particular drive on the same letter, you have to use the DOS SUBST command on the server. For example, edit the server's AUTOEXEC.BAT file and add the line:

```
SUBST Z: D:\DATA
```

Make sure this line comes after you load your network software.

NICOLAS WALDVOGEL
BRUSSELS, BELGIUM

Problem: *Using the Universal Client software, you can't connect to a NetWare server.*

Solution: Most often, this means that the NetWare server is using a different frame type from your client's. Change to the directory where you installed LANtastic 6.0 and edit the NET.CFG file using a text editor such as DOS 6.2's EDIT. Find the PROTOCOL IPXODI section and look for the frame type (for example, ETHERNET_802.3). By default, NetWare 3.11 servers use ETHERNET_802.3 and NetWare 3.12 and 4.x servers use ETHERNET_802.2. Change this line to match your server's frame type.

ARTISOFT CORP.
TECHNICAL SUPPORT

Problem: *You want a way to automate drive mapping each time you start your client.*

Solution: Use the NET SHOW/BATCH command. First, set up your client with all the drive mappings you want. Then, type NET SHOW/BATCH > MAP.BAT. This places the necessary MAP commands in a file called MAP.BAT. Edit STARTNET.BAT (also in the LANtastic directory) and at the end, add the line CALL MAP.BAT. If all of your clients use the same drive mappings, you can copy this file to all of them and call it in all their STARTNET files.

ARTISOFT CORP.
TECHNICAL SUPPORT

HOT TIP LAN MANAGER

Problem: You want your Microsoft LAN Manager clients to see Windows for Workgroups servers.

Solution: Microsoft LAN Manager and Windows for Workgroups are compatible but different in one important way: LAN Manager servers periodically send a broadcast message around the network announcing their presence—Windows for Workgroups servers don't. For LAN Manager clients to see Windows for Workgroups servers, you need to edit the Windows for Workgroups server's SYSTEM.INI file, go to the [network] section, and add the line LMAnnounce=Yes. Restart Windows for Workgroups and your LAN Manager clients should be able to see the server.

DAN DOHAN
SAN JOSE, CALIFORNIA

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Jon Pepper, Windows Sources - May 1994

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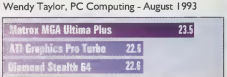
"Matrox's 64-bit MGA boords ore the fostest video occelerators ever to come through our lobs. They're Windows speed demons."
Wendy Taylor, PC Computing - August 1993



Taken from PC Magazine's graphics review (June 28, 1994). WinBench 4.0 @ 1024 x 768 x 24-bit.

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Winn L.Rosch, Jonathan Hill, James Karney, Jan Ozer, Lance Ulanoff, Jeff Mace
PC Magazine - June 28, 1994

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Art Liddle, CADalyst - June 1994

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BACH, MICROSOFT, AND VIDEOHOUND

The Well-Tempered CD Clavier Variations

I found myself stumbling down yet another unmarked side street, the ubiquitous Nepali dust swirling at my feet. Hotel Yak & Yeti loomed ahead, an old Rani palace pressed into the tourism trade decades ago—not unlike so many Sherpas. A labyrinth of signs and jury-rigged corridors led to Boris' Chimney Restaurant. I bellied up to the bar and ordered mango lassi. An ancient Wurlitzer jukebox glowed in the corner, all burled wood and neon and bubbles flowing through colored conduits of water. Fished around in my pocket for a coupla rupees.

Lassi in hand—and ready as always for a few scratchy vinyl oldies—I strolled over to the juke, and . . . the damn thing was full of CDs! A little nine-pin dot-matrix label sat next to the juke's maw: "U.S. Dollars Only," it said. Ain't progress wunnerful?

This month we're going to build a CD jukebox. The original idea for this macro came from a question posted on PC Contact, the *PC Computing* forum on ZiffNet (see page 250 for log-on instructions). A reader had just installed Word 6.0 for Windows and wondered if there was an easy way to dive straight into various reference books, on various CDs, from inside Word. The answer? Absolutely!

You know the feeling. You're typing along, and all of a sudden you have to look something up. Most word processors these days have adequate (even good) spell-checking dictionaries and thesauri. But if you need an encyclopedia or an atlas—or anything else that isn't built into the program itself, for that matter—switching over can be tedious at best. By the time you've Alt-Tabbed out to Program Manager, found the right icon, and brought that trusty multimedia encyclopedia to life, there's a 50-50 chance you've forgotten what you wanted to look up in the first place.

We're going to write the macro in WordBasic because it's the macro language we know best. It should translate easily to Ami Pro or WordPerfect, or any other Windows application with a Basic-like language that supports the Shell command.

Start Up Before you can write the macro, there's a bit of necessary legwork. Gather together all of the CDs you're likely to stick in your virtual "jukebox," make sure they're installed properly, and locate

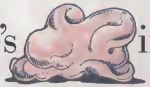
HOW TO DO IT HOT-DOGGING APPLICATIONS WITH WORDBASIC

This Word for Windows macro lets you choose from a list of programs—presumably programs on CDs—then launch those programs from inside Word for Windows. It works with either Version 2.0 or Version 6.0.

```
Sub MAIN
REM CD Jukebox - PC Computing, September 1994
REM Arrays hold descriptions of each CD in the jukebox,
REM plus the command lines necessary to run them
REM
Dim Description$(5), CommandLine$(5), WorkingDir$(5)
Description$(0) = "MS Bookshelf '92"
CommandLine$(0) = "c:\viewer\viewer.exe ↵
↵ e:\books\books92.mvb"
Description$(1) = "Bartlett's Familiar Quotations"
CommandLine$(1) = "c:\viewer\viewer.exe ↵
↵ e:\books\bquote92.mvb"
Description$(2) = "American Heritage Dictionary"
CommandLine$(2) = "c:\viewer\viewer.exe ↵
↵ e:\books\dict92.mvb"
Description$(3) = "Columbia Interactive Encyclopedia"
CommandLine$(3) = "c:\cie\cie.exe"
Description$(4) = "Columbia Quotes"
CommandLine$(4) = "c:\quotes\aapex.exe ccdq.dbp"
WorkingDir$(4) = "c:\quotes"
Description$(5) = "VideoHound"
CommandLine$(5) = "c:\vh\vh.exe"
REM
REM Set up the custom dialog
REM
Title$ = "The Well-Tempered CD"
Begin Dialog UserDialog 320, 144, Title$
    OKButton 226, 2, 88, 21
    CancelButton 226, 26, 88, 21
    Text 10, 36, 134, 13, "Program to Launch:"
    ListBox 10, 55, 302, 84, Description$(), .ProgNumber
End Dialog
Dim GetProgram As UserDialog
REM
REM Run the custom dialog
REM
On Error Goto UserClickedCancel
Dialog GetProgram
On Error Goto 0
i = GetProgram.ProgNumber
REM
REM Have the user load the correct CD, change the directory if
REM necessary, then "shell to" (i.e., run) the chosen program
REM
If MsgBox("Insert CD for " + Description$(i), Title$, 1) Then
        If WorkingDir$(i) <> "" Then ChDir WorkingDir$(i)
        Shell CommandLine$(i)
End If
UserClickedCancel:
End Sub
```

There's on the keyboard,

there's a in the printer,

there's  in the A: drive,

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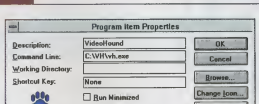
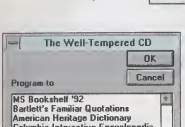
WORKAROUNDS TRANSPORT COMMAND LINES

Locate Command: To find a program's Command Line, go into Program Manager, click once on the program's icon, then on File, Properties.





Transfer to Macro: Now tuck that information into the WordBasic macro in "Hot-Dogging Applications with WordBasic," page 242. When you run this macro in Word for Windows, you'll get something like the screen at left. Double-click on a description and the CD Jukebox will prompt you to insert a CD, then launch the program.

their icons in Program Manager. Then, carefully write down which command line calls up each program. From Program Manager that's easy: Click once on the program's icon, click on File, then Properties, and jot down the line that appears in the Command Line box (see "Transport Command Lines," above). If there's a default directory associated with the program—it'll be in the Working Directory box, just below the Command Line—make sure you write that down, too.

Oft Used We've collected six programs we often use while writing. The first three come from the Microsoft Bookshelf CD. Then there's the Columbia Interactive Encyclopedia and AAPEX's Columbia Quotes. Finally, no library could be complete without Visible Software's reference to the (sniff) art and science of motion pictures, VideoHound. Yeah, yeah, yeah. That's the price you pay for good research, eh?

Armed with this inventory, you're ready to write the macro. Fire up Word, click on Tools, then Macro. Type in a name like `CDJukebox`, and hit Enter. Word provides the `Sub MAIN` and `End Sub`; you get to type in everything else. Working from the code listed in "Hot-Dogging Applications with WordBasic," page 242, substitute your own CD descriptions, command lines, and default directories, if any. The code will handle up to six CDs numbered from 0 to 5 in your jukebox. If you need more CDs, increase the subscripts in the `Dim` statement.

There are a couple of tricky parts to the macro. Writing custom dialog boxes in WordBasic is a rather . . . obtuse undertaking. There are many odd commands. Twiddle with the sample code between `Begin Dialog` and `On Error Goto 0`, and you'll get the hang of it.

The `1` in the `MsgBox()` command simply tells Word to put OK and Cancel buttons in the message. If the user clicks on OK, `MsgBox()` evaluates to `True`, the macro switches directories (with the `ChDir` command) if one is specified, then launches the chosen program by "Shelling out to" whatever is on the command line.

When you have it just about right, click on File, then Save, and then take the Jukebox on a test drive by clicking on the right-wedgie (Play) button.

Now put the CD Jukebox on your Toolbar. Click on Tools, then Customize, and make sure the Toolbars filecard is showing and that "Save Changes In" reads `Normal.dot`. On the left, scroll down to Macros. Then, on the right, click and drag CDJukebox onto the Toolbar. Pick a picture for it, click on Assign, and you're done.

Oh. We fooled you. The CD Jukebox doesn't *really* require that the programs reside on CD! It'll work with any program.

WOODY LEONHARD & VINCENT CHEN

Got a cool idea for a macro? Just drop a note to WOODY *at 72241,2125 or* VINCE *at 72241,2221 on PC Contact.*

TOOL TIPS

ASSEMBLER

Problem: *You want to clear the keyboard buffer.*

Solution: If you're using a DOS input function to read the keyboard, just invoke it through DOS function `0Ch`, which clears the buffer beforehand. Here's one way to do it if you're not using DOS input functions.

Set the buffer's head and tail pointers (maintained in the BIOS data area) equal to each other. The BIOS data area is a region of low memory (segment 40h) that the BIOS uses to store information that it can't store in ROM. The head and tail pointers hold the keyboard buffer locations that the next key code will be read from and written to. The head pointer is stored at `40:1A`, the tail pointer at `40:1C`. Set them equal to empty the keyboard buffer. Here's a simple assembly language routine that shows how:

```
mov     ax,40h
mov     ds,ax
mov     ax,[1Ah]
mov     [1Ch],ax
```

JEFF PROSISE
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

WINDOWS PROGRAMMING

Problem: *You want a good way to prevent multiple instances of your application from starting.*

Solution: You could just prevent a second instance of the application from being started. This confuses inexperienced Windows users, because the program refuses to start and the previous instance may be obscured. A more user-friendly way to prevent multiple instances of a program from running is to display a message box, like this:

```
if (hPrevInstance) {
MessageBox (hwnd, "There is ↵
↳already an instance of this "↵
↳"application running. Click its ↵
↳title bar to activate"↵
↳"it.", "Stop!", MB_OK |↵
↳MB_ICONINFORMATION);
return 0;
}
```

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An even more elegant way to handle this situation is simply to activate the other instance:

```
if (hPrevInstance) {
hwnd = GetWindow
(GetDesktopWindow (),
GW_CHILD);
while (GetWindowWord (hwnd,
GWW_HINSTANCE) !=
hPrevInstance)
hwnd = GetWindow (hwnd,
GW_HWNDNEXT);
SetFocus (hwnd);
return 0;
}
```

If hPrevInstance is non-NULL, this routine uses GetWindow and GetWindowWord to determine the window handle of the previous instance's main (top-level) window. Then it calls SetFocus to activate it. If the previous instance was obscured behind other windows, it will now jump to the foreground.

JEFF PROSISE
CONTRIBUTING EDITOR

EDITABLE GRIDS

Problem: *The grids made by the grid custom control (the VBX that looks like a spreadsheet) are not editable.*

Solution: You can't make them editable, but you can do a good fake. Set them up so that as you move through the grid, the grid triggers a RowColChange event. In this event, you can position a standard Visual Basic edit box in the current cell. Add this code to your grid:

```
Sub Grid1_RowColChange()
'dimension variables
Dim OffsetY%, OffsetX%, I%,
LineWidth%
'initialize the location for the text box
OffsetX = Grid1.Left +
Screen.TwipsPerPixelX 'border
OffsetY = Grid1.Top +
Screen.TwipsPerPixelY 'border
'convert the GridLineWidth from
pixels to twips
LineWidth = Screen.TwipsPerPixelX
* Grid1.GridLineWidth
'calculate the distance to right to
place the text box (including the
grid lines)
For I = Grid1.LeftCol To Grid1.Col - 1
    OffsetX = OffsetX +
    Grid1.ColWidth(I) + LineWidth
Next I
'calculate the distance from the top
to place the text box (including
the grid lines)
For I = Grid1.TopRow To Grid1.
Row - 1
    OffsetY = OffsetY + Grid1.
    RowHeight(I) + LineWidth
Next I
'move the text box and set the focus
to it
Text1.Move OffsetX, OffsetY,
Grid1.ColWidth(Grid1.Col),
Grid1.RowHeight(Grid1.Row)
Text1.ZOrder 0
Text1.SetFocus
End Sub
```

Unfortunately, this works only under simple circumstances. For example, the grid can't scroll, and this code does not account for fixed rows or columns. Also, you need to store the data entered into the text box in the cell of the grid, which needs to be done in the text box's Change event.

TECHNICAL SUPPORT
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BELLY UP TO TOOLBAR

Problem: *Visual Basic lacks a toolbar custom control.*

Solution: You could use group push buttons with pictures assigned to each, but if you have more than a few of these, you'll exhaust Windows' resources. Instead, set up a picture box and put an array of image controls on it. Configure the control array so that every other image control has the depressed image of the button. Assign the code below to that control array:

```
'This flag is defined in the General
Declaration area of the form.
Dim fMouseDown%
Sub Image1_MouseDown (Index As
Integer, Button As Integer, Shift
As Integer, X As Single, Y As Single)
 If Button And 1 Then
    'Move the "down" image control
    to where the "up" is
    Image1(Index + 1).Move
    Image1(Index).Left, Image1
    (Index).Top
    'Make the "up" Invisible and
    the down Visible
    Image1(Index).Visible = False
    Image1(Index + 1).Visible = True
    'Set our flag so we know the
    mouse is down in other events
    fMouseDown = True
 End If
End Sub
Sub Image1_MouseMove (Index As
Integer, Button As Integer, Shift
As Integer, X As Single, Y As Single)
 'If the mouse is no longer over the
button and the down image is
displayed display the up image
If fMouseDown Then
    'offset x and y since the button
    is in a container
    X = X + Image1(Index).Left
    Y = Y + Image1(Index).Top
    If X < Image1(Index).Left Or
    X > Image1(Index).Left +
    Image1(Index).Width Or Y <
    Image1(Index).Top Or Y >
    Image1(Index).Top +
    Image1(Index).Height Then
        'Make the Down Invisible
        and the Up Visible
        Image1(Index + 1).Visible =
        False
        Image1(Index).Visible = True
    Else
        'Make the Up Invisible and
        the Down Visible
        Image1(Index).Visible = False
        Image1(Index + 1) = True
    End If
 End If
End Sub
Sub Image1_MouseUp (Index As
Integer, Button As Integer, Shift
As Integer, X As Single, Y As
Single)
fMouseDown = False
'Make the Down Invisible and the
Up Visible
Image1(Index + 1).Visible = False
Image1(Index).Visible = True
End Sub
```

TECHNICAL SUPPORT
SHERIDAN SOFTWARE

HOT TIP VISUAL BASIC 3.0

Problem: Visual Basic doesn't let you hide multiple document interface (MDI) child forms, making a mess of your screen as they redraw.

Solution: Instead of trying to set its property to Invisible, move the form to an invisible location on the screen. The simplest way to do this is to set the MDI child form's Top property to the negative Height property (for example: frmChild.Top = -frmChild.Height) Then set its Left property to the negative Width value:

```
(frmChild.Left = -
frmChild.Width)
```

TECHNICAL SUPPORT
SHERIDAN SOFTWARE

This Month's Free Software and Shareware

All the public-domain and shareware programs and utilities featured in *PC Computing* each month are available on our online service, PC Contact, or on disk from Public Brand Software for a fee. Shareware requires additional payment to authors for continued use. This month's files are available in PC Contact's data library 3 (Utilities/Misc.). For information on ordering them from Public Brand Software, see below. Here's a sampling of the programs you'll find this month.

WINDOWS: WORD ADD-ON 220

WOPR If you use Word 6.0 for Windows, you need Woody's Office Power Pack (WOPR). It adds the file management that WordPerfect for Windows lords over Word, and a few other neat features, such as a better envelope creator. Download WOPR6L.ZIP.

DOS: XTREE REBORN 226

4FILES If you want a graphical front end to DOS, try 4FILES. This XTree-like program enables you to move files and even annotate them. If you don't like your compression software, use 4FILES as a front end. Download 4FILES.ZIP or call Larry T. Edwards at (907) 747-8996.

NETWORKING: CLEAN HOUSE 239

MPURGE Hierarchical storage management—moving unused files onto slower, less-expensive media than disk drives—is becoming popular in the NetWare realm. If you're interested, try MPURGE, a NetWare Loadable Module (NLM), to locate and back up files you don't need. Download MPURGE.ZIP for a demonstration copy.

TOP PICKS ON DISK

You can easily get all the public-domain utilities or shareware covered in this month's issue by calling Public Brand Software at (800) 426-3475 or (317) 856-7571. Ask for this month's Editors' Picks from *PC Computing*. They're available for $5 or less per disk (most disks have several utilities and programs on them), plus $5 for shipping and handling.

HOW TO JOIN

Current CompuServe or ZiffNet members type GO ZNT:PCCONTAC at any CIS I prompt. Cost varies depending on which CompuServe plan you belong to and the speed at which you connect. For complete membership and hourly rate information, type GO RATES while online.

ZiffNet users pay a monthly membership fee of $2.95. This support fee provides a variety of free and chargeable services. For the latest information about these services, type GO ZNT:ZIFFHELP and download the files GOWORD.TXT and FREE.TXT from data library 1 (General Information).

Follow these steps to join ZiffNet and participate in the PC Contact forum:

1. Set these modem and software parameters: 7 data bits, even parity, 1 stop bit, full duplex.
2. Call CompuServe's sales department at (800) 848-8199 (United States and Canada). From other countries, dial CompuServe direct at (614) 457-8650. You can also call CompuServe with your modem. Set your modem as instructed above and dial (800) 346-3247. Press Enter when your modem connects. Type PHONES at the HOST NAME prompt, press Enter, and follow the onscreen prompts to find a local access number.
3. Dial the access number with a modem. When your modem connects to the network, press Ctrl-C to get the system's attention.
4. At the HOST NAME prompt, type CIS and press Enter.
5. At the USER ID prompt, type 177000,5300 and press Enter.
6. At the PASSWORD prompt, type PC/CONTACT and press Enter.
7. At the ENTER AGREEMENT NUMBER prompt, type PCC94 and press Enter.

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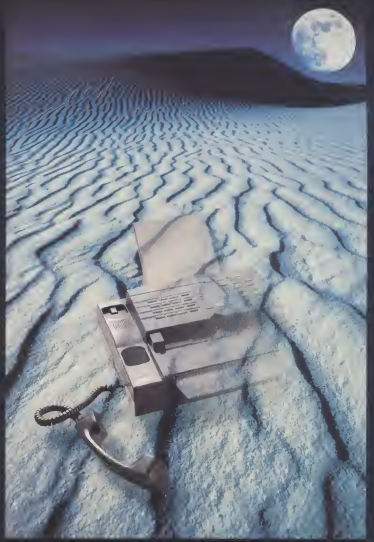

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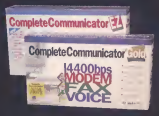

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yes
Fast Ethernet
NetWare

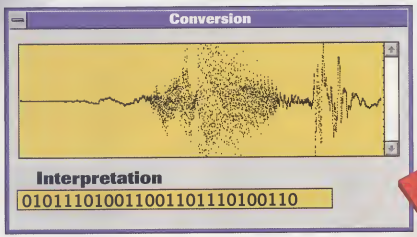
Circle 144 on reader service card.

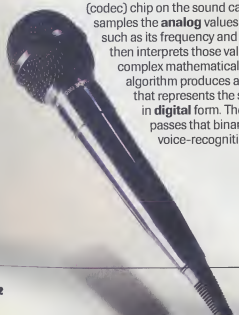
How It Works

BY RON WHITE
ILLUSTRATED BY
TIMOTHY EDWARD DOWNS

Voice Recognition

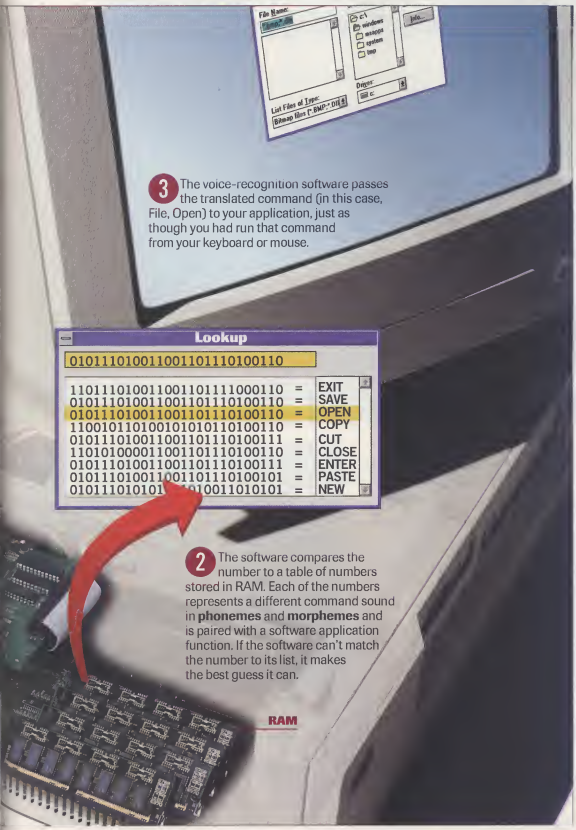
It's no longer science fiction—it's a new tool that can make your computer easier to use. Many utilities can now translate your spoken words into commands—some can even take dictation, but those are rarer. Let's take a look at how your computer gets from the word "open" to the command File, Open.





1 You speak into your sound card's microphone, either **continuously** or **discretely,** depending on the recognition engine's capabilities. The microphone passes the word or words through a coding/decoding (codec) chip on the sound card. The **codec** samples the **analog** values of the sound—such as its frequency and amplitude—and then interprets those values using a complex mathematical algorithm. The algorithm produces a binary number that represents the spoken command in **digital** form. The sound card then passes that binary number to the voice-recognition software.

Say the Word: Your Computer Is All Ears



3 The voice-recognition software passes the translated command (in this case, File, Open) to your application, just as though you had run that command from your keyboard or mouse.

2 The software compares the number to a table of numbers stored in RAM. Each of the numbers represents a different command sound in **phonemes** and **morphemes** and is paired with a software application function. If the software can't match the number to its list, it makes the best guess it can.

KEY WORDS

Continuous: In this context, it's the ability to recognize words without requiring the speaker to insert a pause between them.

Discrete: When a voice-recognition system requires a pause between each word or phrase before translating it into a digital code that is then used by software, the system is called discrete.

Codec: This is an acronym for coding/decoding, a process that converts analog signals to digital code, and vice versa.

Analog: When you measure continuous physical variables, such as a sound that is wavering in pitch and/or volume, a changing electrical current, or time, you're using analog values.

Digital: When you use numbers to represent values, such as analog measurements, you've gone digital.

Phoneme: A small set of sounds constitutes the "building blocks" of a language. Phonemes are considered to be the basic distinctive units of spoken sound from which morphemes, words, and sentences are constructed.

Morpheme: The minimal grammatical unit of a language, morphemes are usually larger than phonemes. Each morpheme constitutes a word or meaningful part of a word that cannot be divided into smaller, independent, grammatical parts, such as "the," or the "ed" of "wanted."

UNDERSTAND V.WHATEVER

Modem Standards: Which One Is Right for You?

Being connected is in. Whether you telecommute, exchange opinions on CompuServe, or send and receive e-mail and faxes, the telephone wire is your lifeline. And, of course, the key element that marries your PC to the telephone wire is the modem. But do you understand how your modem does its job? And, if you're in the market, what kind of modem should you choose?

In ancient times (before the breakup of AT&T, that is), choosing a modem was relatively simple. That's because AT&T held a near-monopoly on local and long-distance telephone service and specified, created, and owned any device that connected directly to its telephone network—including modems. Although you had little choice when buying and connecting a modem, it made life joyously simple.

Today, the world of communications is different. A staggering variety of modems is available from scores of different manufacturers. Unfortunately, as modem availability has increased, so has the complexity of the underlying technology. But with a little background and some practical tips, you'll be able to choose a modem that's right for your communication needs today and tomorrow.

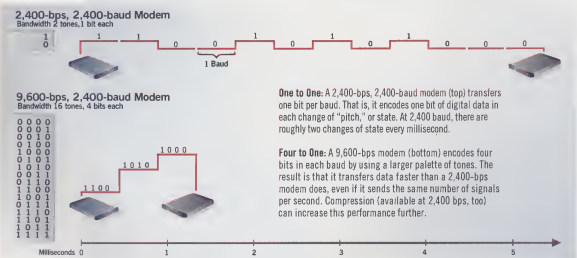
What a Modem Does A modem is a kind of digital-to-analog, analog-to-digital converter. Your PC is digital—that means that the signals it uses to manipulate information occur in only two distinct states: on and off. For your PC to communicate with external devices, therefore, those devices must also be digital.

Your telephone, on the other hand, is principally analog—that means a telephone signal can assume any value within a range designed to accommodate the human voice. Normally, that range is about 3,000Hz wide. (Trivia note: The telephone you use today employs principles and circuitry that have changed little since Alexander Graham Bell's time.) The task of melding the digital world of your PC to the analog world of the telephone falls to your modem.

In practice, a modem receives a digital signal from a PC and converts, or modulates, it to an analog signal. It preserves the information content of the digital signal as a sequence of analog audio tones. It then

HOW IT WORKS THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN BITS AND BAUD

A modem translates your PC's digital language into analog tones to send over a phone line. The number of tones it sends every second is measured in baud, and since there can be more than one bit of data per baud, the total data transfer rate is measured in bits per second.



One to One: A 2,400-bps, 2,400-baud modem (top) transfers one bit per baud. That is, it encodes one bit of digital data in each change of "pitch," or state. At 2,400 baud, there are roughly two changes of state every millisecond.

Four to One: A 9,600-bps modem (bottom) encodes four bits in each baud by using a larger palette of tones. The result is that it transfers data faster than a 2,400-bps modem does, even if it sends the same number of signals per second. Compression (available at 2,400 bps, too) can increase this performance further.

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Circle 126 on reader service card.

transmits these tones over telephone lines in much the same way that your voice travels over them. At the other end, another modem receives the analog signal and reconverts it—or *demodulates* it—back to digital form. (Another trivia note: It is from this process of modulating and demodulating a signal that we derive the acronym *mo-dem*.)

Baud and Bit Rate Modem speeds are measured in *bits per second* (bps), not to be confused with *baud*. The difference between the two is subtle but important. Baud is the number of changes in state that occur in the transmitted signal each second. What's a change in state? Basically, it's when the modem changes from doing one thing to doing another—for example, a change from sending a 1,200Hz tone to sending a 2,400Hz tone. State changes can also be changes in the amplitude or phase of the signal. Each change of state is called a *symbol*. A modem using a 300-baud connection sends 300 distinct symbols per second.

Each symbol is composed of bits of information, and a single symbol can hold more than one bit. A standard 1,200-bps modem, for example, communicates at 600 baud, and encodes 2 bits per symbol. A 9,600-bps modem transmits at 2,400 baud, encoding 4 bits per symbol.

Here's an analogy: On an ordinary piano, label the first 64 keys with the binary values 00000000 (that would be 0 no matter how you spell it) through 11111111 (binary for 64). Now, phone a friend and hit one of the labeled keys. Assuming that your friend can distinguish the note you've played and knows your numbering scheme, he or she can decode 8 bits of information from the single note that you played. Modems use a similar principle, except they change from one "note" to another so fast it sounds more like white noise than individual tones.

A modem's maximum speed is limited by the characteristics of the telephone line. Typically, the upper limit for communication over a telephone circuit is 2,400 baud. Modern modems using advanced signal processing, however, routinely exceed this, allowing signals up to 3,200 baud on quiet lines. By using complex modulation schemes, they can pack up to 9 bits of information into each symbol.

Standards If you listen to a modem while it establishes a connection with another modem, you'll hear various beeps, tones, and squawks. This noise is the two modems trying to find a common "language." The noises are dictated by industry standards.

Every standard is different from every other, and all of them are quite complex. Here's a simple one: the Bell 212A. It's the U.S. 1,200-bps standard and is *full-duplex*: The bandwidth of the channel is divided into two parts and transmission can take place simultaneously in both directions. The originating modem (the name has nothing to do with who made the call) uses a carrier frequency of 1,200Hz. The answering modem (again, the name means nothing) uses a carrier of 2,400Hz. Once they connect, they communicate at 600 baud with two bits (a *dibit*) per symbol—1,200 bps.

And that's a *simple* standard.

Basically, if the modem you're trying to connect to doesn't understand those tones, then you have a problem. That's why the modem industry has standards (both de facto and committee-organized) that describe every aspect of a modem's signal.

The standards supported by a typical high-speed modem can be confusing, but they provide important information. Ultimately, they determine both the type of modems to which you can connect and how fast you can transfer data. The complete collection of International Telephone and Telegraph Consultative Committee (CCITT—it's French) and Electronic Industries Association (EIA) modem standards easily fills an entire bookcase. Fortunately, only a handful are significant for the typical PC modem.

- The V.32 standard provides speeds up to 9,600 bps—consider this the minimum acceptable. In most cases, you'll be better off if you insist on a V.32bis

FYI SIGNALING SPEEDS

Protocol	Top Speed (bps)
Bell 103	300
Bell 212A	1,200
V.22bis	2,400
V.32	9,600
V.32bis	14,400
V.32terbo	19,200
V.fast	28,800

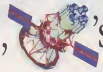
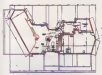
Modem Speeds: Are standards just so much alphabet soup? These are the signaling standards used by most modems today. By the time you read this column, V.fast should have evolved into an accepted standard called V.34.

BOTTOM LINE WHAT GOOD IS A FAST MODEM?

Service	Speed (bps)	Protocol	Compression/ Error Checking
CompuServe	14,400 (in most areas)	V.32bis	MNP 4
America Online	9,600	V.32	V.42 and MNP 1 to 5
Prodigy	9,600	V.32	V.42bis, V.42, and MNP 1 to 5
MCImail	9,600 (but should be 14,400 by the time you read this)	V.32	MNP 4 and MNP 5

Source: Service providers

Can't Connect: If you rushed out today and bought a V.32terbo or V.fast-class modem, you wouldn't see the higher performance on any of the popular online services. Above are the top speeds they support.

Yes, you can do Windows™ and walls and doors and floors, ceilings, whole 's, 's, trains, boats, 's, chains, 's, diamond rings, 's and things,  's, power plants, topo maps,  's, helicopters, roads and bridges, circuit boards, 's power lines, 's, airports, furniture, digital terrain models, 's, skateboards, the , 's, chemical plants, 's, golf courses, anything you can think of ... even the kitchen .

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modem. The V.32bis standard extends V.32 up to 14,400 bps and is the prevalent high-speed standard. If communication with older modems is important, be sure that the modem also supports the V.22bis (2,400 bps) standard and the Bell 212A (1,200 bps) standard.

• If you find that 14,400 bps is too slow, the CCITT is currently developing V.fast (or V.34), which will provide speeds up to 28,800 bps on high-quality phone lines. Although some manufacturers have already produced so-called V.fast modems, the true standard (probably to be finalized as V.34) is still under development, and it may be some time before it is released and implemented in hardware.

• Because of the delay on V.34, some manufacturers have developed the V.32terbo pseudo-standard. By extending the technology described in V.32bis to encode more bits per symbol, V.32terbo claims to operate at speeds of 16,800 and 19,200 bps. Although it's been snubbed by the CCITT, several chip makers and dozens of manufacturers have lined up behind V.32terbo, including AT&T and National Semiconductor. And even though V.fast should be a standard by the time you read this, the modems will still be very expensive. That's why, if you need a fast modem immediately, you might want to buy a V.32terbo, which will probably be a bit less expensive.

• Unlike those described above, the V.42 and V.42bis standards don't indicate speed or modulation methods. Instead, they describe procedures and algorithms that perform error checking and data compression, respectively.

V.42 is an error-control protocol. If the receiving modem detects an error in the incoming data (using a *checksum*—a mathematical formula that can check data integrity), it can request that the originating modem retransmit the block. Unlike software protocols, such as Xmodem, the error and subsequent retransmission take place solely between modems; that means no CPU time is required, and your PC sees only error-free data.

The V.42bis standard describes a method of data compression in which outgoing data can be compressed to as little as 25 percent of its original size before transmission. The V.42bis standard requires that some form of error control (V.42, for example) be present as well. If you combine the maximum compression of V.42bis with the 14,400-bps top speed of a V.32bis modem, it's possible you'll see an effective transfer rate of 57,600 bps.

• Faxing is becoming a very popular option for modems, and support is usually described as either Class 1 or Class 2. A modem that conforms to the Class 2 standard makes far fewer demands on CPU time than a Class 1 modem does—this can be crucial in a multitasking environment. But beware: The Class 2 specification doesn't require that Class 1 commands be supported. Most fax software supports both Class 1 and Class 2 fax modems, but check before you buy either the modem or the software.

One Last Bit If you're still communicating at 1,200 or even 2,400 bps, a new modem can offer you a fourfold or higher increase in productivity. At a minimum, your modem should have V.32 or V.32bis compatibility with V.42 error control and V.42bis data compression. To maintain compatibility, make sure the modem supports the V.22bis and Bell 212A standards. For fax applications, it should also support the final EIA/TIA-592 Class 2 standard. And look for a modem that you can upgrade to V.fast (preferably through software) when it's ratified as a standard.

The final and most important attribute of a modem is quality. At their heart, most modern modems are built around very similar chip sets that are mass-produced by a relatively small number of manufacturers, including AT&T, National Semiconductor, and Rockwell. With one of these chip sets and just a few dozen additional components, anyone can produce a high-speed data and fax modem. But modems built with a minimum component count tend to offer minimum performance, often failing to connect at higher speeds or over noisy lines. The difference in price between apparently similar modems can be measured in lost productivity.

The types of modems available are sure to expand with the introduction of new standards and functions. Already appearing on the horizon as potential standard features are Class 3 fax and modems with integrated voice mail. Regardless of your needs, you're sure to find a modem that can fill them and a bit more.

ROBERT L. HUMMEL *is a contributing editor to* PC Computing *and author of* Programmer's Technical Reference: Data and Fax Communications *(Ziff-Davis Press, 1991). You can reach him c/o Help, PC Computing, 950 Tower Lane, 19th Floor, Foster City, CA 94404.*

FYI MAKE SENSE OF **COMPRESSION AND ERROR CHECKING**

Protocol	What It Does
V.42	Provides error control
V.42bis	Compresses data (about a 4:1 ratio)
MNP 4	Provides error control
MNP 5	Compresses data (about a 2:1 ratio)
MNP 7	Compresses data (about a 3:1 ratio)
T.4, T.6, and T.30	Describe the characteristics of Group 3 (digital) fax machines
EIA/TIA-578	Describes Class 1 fax modem commands
EIA/TIA-592	Describes Class 2 fax modem commands
SP2388	Preliminary (incompatible) version of EIA/TIA-592

Learned Letters: After signaling comes data-compression and error-control. Most common are V.42 and V.42bis, which go with the V.32 signaling standards. MNP is a widely used protocol from Microcom.

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Color Ink Jet: Low-Cost Zip

So maybe deep down you don't like your clients. Why else would you force them to wade through a sea of gray graphs and charts? Give them a break: Give them color. Used judiciously color can clarify, emphasize, highlight, persuade, explain, cajole, celebrate—and sell. Best of all, you no longer have to ante up $4,500 and $1 per page to get it. Don't get us wrong—color thermal wax-transfer printers have their place, especially for continuous-tone images and complex graphics. But most of us simply need tightly registered hues in straightforward patterns at low costs. Today's business ink-jet printers are made to order for such applications.

If you haven't looked at a color ink jet printer in the last year or so, you're in for a surprise. Business ink jets have overcome the drawbacks that still plague personal and low-end models. They now use 104-nozzle print cartridges (personal ink jets use 50-nozzle cartridges) that provide sharper images across a wider range of papers and transparencies. Look for the same 300-by-600-dot-per-inch output you'd expect from a monochrome laser printer.

Print performance has been greatly enhanced as well. Better ink jets produce laserlike speeds of 6 pages per minute for black-and-white output, and 1 to 2 minutes per page for color. Look for a draft or fast mode for rush jobs. Some ink jets feature as many as three modes, allowing you to choose the quality/performance trade-off you prefer.

Improved performance comes from RISC processors that are now standard in business ink-jet printers and from heated paper paths, which dry the ink faster so that it doesn't smudge. Faster-drying ink also allows the print head to make multiple passes on the page for tighter color registration.

As with any business printer, you'll want your ink jet to support PCL 5. PostScript Level 2 should be an upgrade option in case you later need it.

If the ink jet is your sole printer, you'll need 4MB of RAM—on a network, get at least 8MB. The cartridge for black should have a larger ink reservoir than those for cyan, magenta, and yellow. Be sure to ask for a list of third-party manufacturers of ink cartridges.

MARTY JEROME

COLOR INK JET

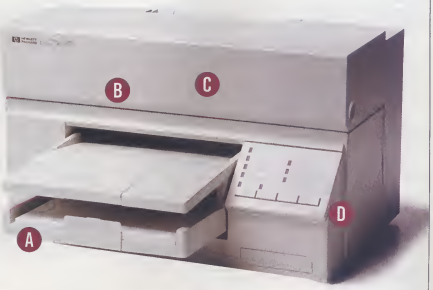
IT'S EASY TO GET **HIGH RESOLUTION** AND **PERFORMANCE**

A. Speed: Six pages per minute for black-and-white documents; 1 to 2 minutes per page for color.

B. Resolution: 300-by-600-dpi for "quality" mode, but look for a draft mode as well.

C. Cartridges: In addition to the standard cyan, magenta, and yellow cartridges, black has its own larger cartridge. Each cartridge has 104 nozzles.

D. RAM: 4MB for personal use; 8MB or more for network use.



Interface: Network option in addition to high-speed parallel interface with auto-switching between the two.

Fonts and printer language: PCL 5 built-in with PostScript Level 2 option; at least 25 internal fonts, 10 TrueType.

Other features: Fast-drying ink is now available, as are heated paper paths, which make slow-drying ink solid in an instant.

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Direct to You

SPEC WATCH:
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NETWORK **SERVERS**

CPU: Intel 486DX2/66, 486DX4, or Pentium.

RAM: 16MB, expandable to 128MB.

CPU RAM cache: 256K.

Display: 14-inch Super VGA color or monochrome.

Video card: Super VGA with 512K of RAM.

Hard drive: 1GB SCSI-2.

Bus: Eight EISA slots with two VL-Bus or PCI.

Drive bays: Two full-height 5¼-inch, two half-height 5¼-inch with front-panel access, two 3½-inch.

Features and options: RAID-5, DAT backup, uninterruptible power supply, dual-speed CD-ROM drive, built-in SCSI-2 controller, Ethernet controller, protected power switch to prevent accidentally turning the power off.

Other requirements: FCC Class A or better, UL listed.

RED FLAGS: Systems with ISA bus or slotted RAM are less upgradable. Database and other application servers need more CPU power than a file server.

MIDRANGE **DESKTOP** SYSTEMS

CPU: Intel 486DX2/66, 486DX4, or Pentium.

Secondary cache: 256K four-way set-associative.

Memory: 8MB, expandable to 32MB, 36-pin SIMMs.

Floppy drive: 3½-inch.

Hard drive: 400MB or larger IDE or SCSI-2.

Video: VL-Bus or PCI Windows accelerator, 15-inch monitor or larger with 72Hz refresh at 1,024 by 768 pixels.

Slots: Eight ISA slots for full-sized case (including two VL-Bus or PCI), three ISA slots for small-footprint case with integrated VL-Bus or PCI video and drive.

Drives and bays: One 3½-inch 1.44MB and one 5¼-inch 1.2MB floppy drive, five half-height 5¼-inch bays.

Features and options: Dual-speed or faster CD-ROM drive, sound card or built-in sound capability, two parallel ports, two COM ports, and keyboard and mouse ports.

RED FLAGS: Watch for Pentium-upgradable systems that don't include a ZIF socket, secondary CPU cache, or lots of slots for extra RAM.

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RED FLAGS: Watch for Pentium-upgradable systems that don't include a ZIF socket, secondary CPU cache, or lots of slots for extra RAM.

SUBNOTEBOOK PCS

CPU: Intel 33MHz 486SX.

Display type: 7¼-inch backlit passive, dual-scan passive, or active-matrix LCD.

Weight: 4 pounds or less.

Size: Smaller than 8½ by 11 by 2 inches.

Keyboard: 85 percent of full-sized keyboard.

RAM: 4MB, expandable to 16MB.

Hard drive: 80MB or larger.

Features and options: Removable hard drive, high-speed internal fax modem, integrated pointing device, infrared keyboard connection.

Other requirements: External floppy, at least one PCMCIA Type II slot, small recharger (5½ by 3 by 1¼ inches or smaller).

RED FLAGS: Subnotebook displays and keyboards entail compromise—try before you buy, or make sure there's a money-back guarantee with no restocking charge. In addition, many subnotebook batteries run down quickly, particularly when you're using color. Make sure the battery is easy to replace. User-installable RAM is also a plus.

NOTEBOOK PCS

CPU: 33MHz 486.

Display type: 9½-inch or larger backlit dual-scan passive- or active-matrix color LCD with accelerated local bus. Look for adjustable contrast and brightness controls.

Weight: Less than 7 pounds without AC adapter; total traveling weight less than 9 pounds.

Size: Smaller than 10 by 12 by 2 inches.

RAM: 8MB, expandable to 20MB.

Hard drive: 120MB.

Ports/slots: Parallel, 9-pin serial, PS/2 ports; one PCMCIA Type III slot or two Type II slots.

Features and options: Ability to swap out floppy drive for second battery, removable hard drive, user-installable RAM, integrated pointing device. Pen pointing device and touch screen can be useful in some instances. Look for notebooks that support new Duracell standard-sized rechargeable batteries.

Other requirements: Standby mode, pop-up battery gauge, 6-by-3-by-3-inch (or smaller) battery recharger.

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intel inside

AcerNote Gives You Easy Upgrades!

You also get the same convenient, upgradable architecture in the AcerNote 760 series as in the higher-priced 780cx. A revolutionary modular design makes upgrading components and servicing easy. If you're on the road when you need more storage or memory, you can simply plug in off-the-shelf components yourself.

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- 340MB 2.5" Hard Disk Drive
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- 1.44MB Diskette Drive
- Local Bus Accelerated Graphics
- MS-DOS 6.2, Microsoft Windows 3.1
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- Suspend-to-Disk feature, "No-Reboot" CMOS setup and Suspend-Resume hot button preserve battery life
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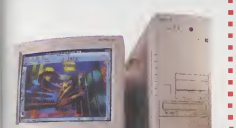

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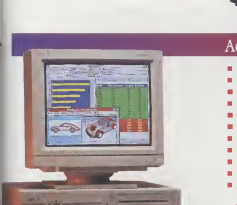

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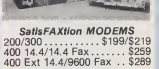

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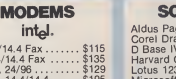

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80387-DX (Does All)	74 00
80487-SX (Does All)	299 00
Intel SX (Does All)	69 00
Intel SL Mobil	69 00
Intel 16SX	39 00
Intel 20SX	49 00

Call for overdrive chips

AMBRA

Ambra Pentium-60	4/8/16 Meg	175 00/339 00/699 00
Ambra NC 425SL	2/4/8 Meg	109.00/209 00/449 00
Ambra N Series	4/8/12/16 Meg	189 00/379 00/569 00/829 00
Ambra SN Series	4/16 Meg	189 00/829 00
Ambra Sprinta SLC II	2/8 Meg	Call/Call

CYRIX DRx² 386 to 486 Upgrade
Clock Doubler

- Single chip upgrade solution
- Clock doubling technology
- Compatible with Industry standard 386DX CPU socket
- Compatible with DOS, Windows, 3:X, OS/2 1.3 and 2.x
- Uses Industry standard math chip
- Easy to install—about 15 minutes

The Cyrix upgrade runs at twice the speed of your original 386 microprocessor combined with a 1K on-chip cache you will enjoy a performance boost of 100% and more. Ideal for any DOS, Windows or OS/2 application which requires a large amount of microprocessor horsepower.

CX486 DRx²-16/32	260 00
CX486 DRx²-20/40	279.00
CX486 DRx²-25/50	319 00
CX486 DRx²-33/66	350 00
CX486 SRX2 16/32	240 00
CX486 SRX2 20/40	249 00
CX486 SRX2 25/50	270 00

SIMM MODULES (Add $5.00 for SIPP)

	40NS	50NS	60NS	70NS	80NS	100NS
1Meg x 9 (3 chip)	–	49 00	44 00	43 00	41 50	–
1Meg x 9 (9 chip)	–	–	46.00	45 00	43 00	39 00
4Meg x 9	–	–	162 00	158 00	149.00	–
16Meg x 9 (9 chip)	–	–	–	679 00	–	–

72 PIN SIMMS (EISA)

256 x 36	–	–	–	–	59 00	–
512 x 36	–	–	–	96 00	94 00	–
1 meg x 36	–	–	184 00	174 00	174 00	–
2 x 36	–	–	359 00	339 00	339 00	–
4 x 36 (9 chip)	–	–	689 00	669 00	669 00	–
8 x 36	–	–	1459 00	1419 00	–	–
16 x 36	–	–	2606 00	2745 00	–	–
1 x 32	–	–	174 00	184 00	–	–
2 x 32	–	–	339 00	319 00	–	–
4 x 32	–	–	649 00	629 00	–	–

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AST MEMORY

MODEL	AMT UPDRADED	AST PART #		PRICE
Bravo LC 4/25S, 4/33, 433S 4/50d 4/66d	4Meg	500987-002	72 pin	165 00
	8Meg	500987-003		330 00
	16Meg	500887-004		619 00
	32Meg	500887-005		1399 00
Premium 486/25 25E, 33, 33E Premium 386/33TE, 486/25TE, 33TE Prem Serv Prem II 386SX/20, 25 Prem II 386/25 386/33 486/33 486SX/20	8Meg	500780-001	64 pin	368 00
Premium 386/33T Prem 386SX/16 Prem II 386SX/20 25		500780-004		189 00
Premium 386/25 33 386/33T 386SX/16, Prem II 386SX20 25		500780-003		58 00
		500780-001		59 00
Premia 4/33S 4/33 4/500, 4/660	8Meg	501159-002		379 00
Premia	16Meg	501159-003		769 00
Premia	32Meg	501159-004		1469 00
Premia	64Meg	501159-005		3111 00
AST Cupid Bd	0–32Meg	500818-001		176 00

ZENITH MEMORY MODULES

MODEL	AMT. UPGRADED	AST PART #	PRICE
Z386/33, 25, 20, 33E	1Meg	ZA3600ME	59 00
Z386/33, 25, 20, 33E, 486/25E	4Meg	ZA3800MK	180 00
Z386SX	2Meg	Z-605-1 modules	119.00

MAGNAVOX

286/386SX-16, 386SX-20, 486SX-20 & 386-33 *all are 72PIN SIMM*
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IBM PART NO	WORKS WITH MODEL NO	PRICE
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30F5360 (2Meg)	30-286, 25-286, 50 MTHR BD	104 00
32G372 (16Meg ecc)	9595 OPT	
6450375 (1Meg)	80-041	79 00
6450379 (2Meg)	80 111 311-121, 321, 081 181	84 00
6451060 (4Meg)	80-A21 A-61 80-A31, 80-111, 80-311	189 00
6450604 (2Meg)	70-061 E61, 121 50Z, 55SX 65SX P-70 55LS 65LS, X-Station 120 & 130, 35SX 35LS, 40SX	89 00
6450608 (2Meg)	70-A21 A-61 B-21, B-61, 35SX, 35LS, 40SX, Val Pt 325T	90.00
78X8955 (128K)	25	35 00
34F2933 (4Meg)	35SX, 40SX, 55SX, 65SX, 55LS, 65LS	175 00
87F9977 (4Meg)	55SX 55LS, 65SX 40SX, 35SX, 35LS	175 00
1057035 (512K)	P/S1-286	49 00
92F9935 (2Meg)	P/S1 & P/S1/386SX-2121	109 00
92F9694 (4Meg)	P/S1 & P/S1/386SX, Model-2121	189 00
92G7200 (4Meg)	PSII Expert Consultant Willow	184 00
92G7201 73G3131 (4Meg)	Value Point Performance, PC Server 4/66	164 00
92G7203 (8Meg)	Value Point Performance PC Server 4/66	359 00
92G7204 (16Meg)	Value Point Performance, PC Server 4/66	699 00
92G7205 (32Meg)	Value Point Performance, PC Server 4/66	1539 00
96F9290 (4Meg)	Standard 1x3 70 Simms	172 00
96F9291 (16Meg)	Standard 4x9-70 Simms	672 00
6450902 (2Meg)	56 57, 57SX,90 95 P-75 57SLC Value Point 77 486DX2 486SX SVR 85	90 00
60G1622 (16Meg)	PS/1, Value Point Perf	699 00
6450128 (4Meg)	57SX, 90, 95 P-75 57SLC 56, 56SLC P/S1 386SX Mod-2123, 2133 2155 Val Pt 77 486CS2, 486SX SVR85 Value Point 77 486DX2, 486SX, SVR 85	175 00
6450129 (8Meg)	35SX, 40SX	330 00
6450130 (8Meg)	56, 57, 57SX 90 95 P-75 57SLC Value Point 77 486DX2, 486SX, SVR 85	339 00
6451158 (4Meg ecc)	486 95XP, 95A (install in pairs)	209 00
6451159 (8Meg ecc)	486 95XP, 95A (install in pairs	409 00

IBM NOTEBOOK & LAPTOP MEMORY

8169098 (4Meg)	Thinkpad 500 510CS	199 00
8169099 (8Meg)	Thinkpad 500 510CS	369 00
8169113 (16Meg)	Thinkpad 510CS	869 00
79F0999 (2Meg)	LX40, N33SX PS Note Thinkpad 710T	103 00
79F1000 (4Meg)	LX40, N33SX, PS Note Tkpd 350, 350c, 710T PS Note 425	189 00
79F1001 (8Meg)	LX40, N33SX PS Note Thinkpad 710T	369 00
07G1415 (4Meg)	Thinkpad 750, 750c, 755 360	209 00
07G1416 (8Meg)	Thinkpad 750, 750c, 755 360	389 00
66G0094 (16Meg)	Thinkpad 750, 750c, 755 360	849 00
07G1420 (4Meg)	CL57LSX LpTp Thinkpad 700 700C, 720, 720C	209 00
07G1421 (8Meg)	CL57LSX LpTp Thinkpad 700 700C, 720, 720C	389 00
60G0378 (8Meg)	Thinkpad 350 350c, PS Note 425	339 00
60G0379 (16Meg)	Thinkpad 350 350c, PS Note 425	649 00
92F6604 (2Meg)	N45SL	109 00

COMPAQ MEMORY MODULES

MODEL	AMT UPGRADED	CMPQ PART #	PRICE
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486/25, 486/33L,	8Meg Module	116561-001	429 00
486/50L, System Pro	32Meg Module	116568-001	1459 00
DeskPro 386/33L, 486/33L	(Exp Bd)	116569-001	279 00
DeskPro 386/25, 386/20	1Meg Module	113131-001	79 00
	4Meg Module	113132-001	199 00
DeskPro 386S-16MHz	1Meg Exp Bd	113633-001	149 00
	4Meg Exp Bd	113634-001	279 00
	1Meg Module	113646-001	79 00
	4Meg Module	112534-001	199 00
DeskPro 386/20E	1Meg Exp Bd	113644-001	149 00
DeskPro 386/25E	4Meg Exp Bd	113645-001	279 00
	1Meg Module	113131-001	79 00
	4Meg Module	113132-001	219 00
DeskPro 286N, 386N,	1Meg Module	118688-001	59 00
386SX/20, 386/25M, 486/33M,	2Meg Module	118689-001	89 00
486S/25M, 486S/16M	4Meg Module	118690-001	189 00
Port. I Series 486C	8Meg Module	128877-001	389 00
M Series Exp Bd	0-64Meg	129160-001	189 00
DeskPro 386/16	1Meg Kit	108071-001	99 00
	4Meg Kit	108072-001	299 00
	1-2Meg Exp Bd	108069-001	239 00
	4-8Meg Exp Bd	108070-001	437 00
DeskPro 286	512K Kit	113012-001	49 00
DeskPro 5/60, 5/66M 5/66M (ALL OF THESE MACHINES USE THESE MODULES)	8Meg Kit	149911-001	389 00
Prosignia 5/60	16Meg Kit	149949-001	707 00
Prollant 100 5/60	32Meg Kit	149912-001	1399 00
Prollant 2000 4/30, 5/68	64Meg Kit	149913-001	2700 00
Prollant 4000 4/50, 5/66	128Meg Kit	149914-001	5900 00
Prolinea 386 3/25S 3/25ZS	2Meg	141738-001	109 00
	8Meg	141742-001	338 00
Prolinea 486 4/25S 4/33 4/50, 4/66, CDS	2Meg	141683-001	95 00
Enhanced Prolinea Prosano series	4Meg	141684-001	175 00
	8Meg	141685-001	339 00
Prosignia PC Server, 486/33,	8Meg	141685-001	339 00
486 DSX/66	16Meg	149320-001	699 00
	32Meg	149147-001	1525 00

COMPAQ LAPTOPS & NOTEBOOKS

LTE/286	2Meg Bd	117081-002	99.00
LTE/286	4Meg Bd	117081-003	179.00
LTE/386S/20	4Meg Module	121125-002	209 00
LTE LITE/20, 26, 25C	4Meg Module	129769-002	209 00
LTE LITE/20 25, 25C	8Meg Module	129769-003	409 00
LTE LITE/20, 25, 25C	16Meg Module	129769-004	809 00
LTE LITE 425C/33C/25E/255L	4Meg Module	142337-002	189.00
LTE LITE 425C/33C/25E/255L	8Meg Module	142337-003	349 00
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	8Meg	144790-002	369 00
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Contura 320 325	2Meg	139497-001	99.00
	4Meg	139498-001	189 00
	8Meg	139499-001	349 00
Contura 4/25, 4/25C, 4/25CX	4Meg	146520-001	189 00
	8Meg	146521-001	339 00
	16Meg	146531-001	739 00
Aero 4/25, 4/33L	4Meg	190532-001	164 00
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T2000/T2000SX	2Meg	PC18-PA8317U	79 00
T2000SX/T1000LE	4Meg	PC-PA8314U	189 00
T2000SX/T1000LE	8Meg	PC14-PA8315U	359 00
T2000SXE/2200SX/T1800, 1850, C	2Meg	PC-PA2000U	79 00
T2000SXE/2200SX/T1800, 1850 C	4Meg	PC-PA2001U	189 00
T2000SXE/2200SX/T1800, 1850, C	8Meg	PC-PA2002U	359 00
T4400SX, SXC T6400 T6600	4Meg	PC-PA2004U	199 00
T4400SX, SXC T6400, T6600	8Meg	PC-PA2005U	369 00
T4400SX, SXC T6400, T6600	16Meg	PC-PA2010U	699 00
T4500 C T4600 T4700, T1900 C T1910, T1950 (3.3 v)	4Meg	PC-PA2012U	199 00
T4500 C T4600 T4700 T1900 C T1910, T1950 (3.3 v)	8Meg	PC-PA2013U	389 00
T4500 C, T4600, T4700, T1900 C T1910, T1950 (3.3 v)	16Meg	PC-PA2014U	769 00
T3300SL	6Meg	PC-PA2008U	266 00
T3300SL	16Meg	PC-PA2009U	699 00
T3400CT, T2400, T3600	4Meg	PC-PA2019V	194 00
T3400CT, T2400, T3600	8Meg	PC-PA2020V	369 00
T3400CT, T2400, T3600	16Meg	PC-PA2021V	763 00
T3400CT	32Meg		1549 00
T1200XE	2Meg	PC13-PA8306	99 00
T1600	2Meg	PC8-PA8302U	99 00
T3100	2Meg	PC3-PA7135E	139 00
T3100e	2Meg	PC9-PA8340U	109 00
T3100SX	2Meg	PC15-PA8308U	109 00
T3100SX	4Meg	PC15 PA8310U	189 00
T3200	3Meg	PC6-PA7137U	165 00
T3200SX	2Meg	PC12-PA8307U	119 00
T3200SX	4Meg	PC12-PA8909	199 00
T3200SXC	2Meg	PC19-PA8318U	119 00
T3200SXC	4Meg	PC19-PA8319U	199 00
T5100	2Meg	PC7-PA8301U	95 00
T5200/T8500	2Meg	PC10-PA8304U	114 00
T5200/T6500	8Meg	PC10-PA8313U	419 00

NOTEBOOK, LAPTOP MEMORY

MODEL	AMT UPGRADED	MANU PART #	PRICE
ACER 730	2Meg/4Meg/8Meg		109/209/399
ACER 750	4Meg/8Meg/16Meg		199/459/869
ALR Ventura	4Meg	12407980	249 00
AST Ascentia 900N	4Meg/8Meg/16Meg		229/469/899
AST Bravo & Explorer	4Meg/16Meg	501255-001 -002	189/789
AST Notebook Prem Exec 386SX/20/25/25L	4Meg	500814-003	189 00
AST Power Exec 3/25C, 425EL	4Meg		199 00
AST Power Exec 3/25C, 425EL	16Meg		819 00
AST Power Exec 425SL	4Meg	501166-001	199 00
AST Power Exec 425SL	16Meg	501166-003	819 00
AST Power Exec 4/33SL	4Meg/16Meg	501318-001,002	194/769
AT&T Safari NSX/20	4Meg	PEC 37651	259 00
Bondwell B310, Plus	1Meg	23050-09100	109 00
Bondwell B310V, SX	1Meg		109 00
Bondwell B310V, SX	4Meg		229 00
Canon Innova 486	2Meg/4Meg/8Meg		109/209/449
Canon Notejet 486	4Meg/ 8 Meg		199/389
Chicony, Ultra, Hyundai 386	4Meg		199 00
Epson NB3	4Meg	A808511	199 00
Everex Tempo LX, LX20, Carrier	2Meg	PCA 00053-0001	109 00
Gateway 2000 Colorbook 4/33	4Meg/16Meg		199/799
Gateway 2000 Nomad 425 DXL/SXL	4Meg/16Meg		199/1189
Gateway 2000 486 Hardbook	4Meg/16Meg		199/799
Goldstar GS520 386SX/16	4Meg	S386-4M	249 00
Grid 1720 1750 1755	1Meg		49 00
HP Omnibook	2Meg/4Meg		129/279
Magnavox Metalis	1Meg/4Meg	286 386SX	109/199
NCR Safari 3180	4Meg/ 8 Meg		229/449
NEC Prospeed 286 386SX-16	1Meg	PC21-21	79 00
NEC Prospeed 286, 386SX-16	4Meg	PC21-22	199 00
NEC Prospeed 386	2Meg	PC31-21	119 00
NEC Prospeed 386	8Meg	PC31-22	399 00
NEC Prospeed 386SX-20	1Meg	PC43-21	79 00
NEC Prospeed 386SX-20	4Meg	PC43 22	199.00
NEC Ultralite Versa	4 Meg/8Meg/16Meg/20Meg	OP4104	183/359/799/988
Packard Bell 386SX 286	1Meg 4Meg	286 386SX	109/199
Packard Bell Statesman	2Meg/8Meg		119/419
Panasonic CF170, CF270, CF370	1Meg	CF-BA165	49 00
Panasonic CF380, CF480	2Meg/4Meg/6Meg		119/199/309
Panasonic CF-V21P, CF-580	4Meg/16Meg		219/819
Sanyo 17/18 N6	2Meg	MBC-NBMEM2	109 00
Sharp 6781, 6881, 6785	2Meg/4Meg		109/199
Sharp PC-6220	1Meg	CE 6218	79 00
Tandon, PC Brand, Dataworld	2Meg/8Meg	NB386SX-20	118/429
TI Travelmate 2000	1Meg	2568034-0001	79 00
TI Travelmate 3000	2Meg	2566996-1	84 00
TI 4000 TI 4000E	4Meg/16Meg		199/999
Tandy 1610, 2810 3810	1Meg		49 00
Tandy 2820, 3820 3830	2Meg/4Meg/6 Meg		119/199/309
Twinhead, Altima Compudyne, 486SX, DX Tandy 4860	4Meg/16Meg		199/859
Ultra 486	2Meg, 4Meg, 6Meg		119/199/309
Zeos 386SX Notebook (not the + version)	2Meg		109 00
Zenith Master Sport 386SX	2Meg	ZA-300-1	114 00
Zenith Master Sport SL SLE, 800, 620, 625NL	2Meg	ZA-4-4	119 00
Zenith Super Sport 286, 286E	1Meg	ZA-180-66	99 00
286E, SX	2Meg	ZA-180-64	149 00
SX Alpha	2Meg	ZA-180-86	149 00
SX Beta	2Meg	ZA-180-87	149 00
Zenith Z-Note 325L, LC	2Meg/8Meg	ZA3250-4/5	126/419
Zenith Z-Note 425LN LNC LNP	4/8/16Meg		269/519/839

PCMCIA VERSION 2.0 (for Palmtop & Subnotebooks)

MODEL	PRICE	MODEL	PRICE
S-RAM Cards 1MEG	159 00	Lan Ethernet (10 Base T)	159 00
S-RAM Cards 2MEG	179 00	Lan Ethernet (Coax)	159 00
14 400/14,400 Data/Fax Modems	189.00	Visual Media (CD Rom, Tape Dr)	279 00
Readwriter Card	199 00	Bus Toaster™ (High speed SCSI II)	299.00
		.Wavjammer™ (16 bit stereo sound card)	319
		105 Mg Type III Hard Drive	457 00

FLASH MEMORY 2 5Meg–299 00 5 Meg–357 00 10Meg–555 00 20Meg–909 00
(Flash Memory Cards appear to the host computer as a hard disk drive In a DOS environment your system will see the flash card much like an IDE hard disk drive and assign it a logical drive (e g D) No battery to deal with Also all capacities come with data compression software to double the amount of flash memory

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AMOUNT UPGRADED	0K Bd	256k	1	2	3	3.8	4	5	6	8	16	32
Canon LBP 430	–	–	60	–	–	–	189	–	–	–	–	-
Canon LBP 860	–	–	–	99	–	–	179	–	–	349	669	1249
Canon LBP4, 4Lite, 4plus	–	–	159	219	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	-
Epson 6000, Action Laser	–	–	–	139	–	–	229	–	–	–	–	-
Epson Action Laser II	–	–	89	–	208	–	–	327	–	*IN STOCK		
Epson 8000	–	–	69	–	208	–	–	327	–			
Epson 1000, 1500	–	–	–	*119**	–	–	*238**	–	*Call*	–	–	-
HP 2, 2D	–	–	–	109	–	–	189	–	–	–	–	
HP 3 3D 3P, 2P 2P+	–	–	–	99	–	–	169	–	–	–	–	-
HP 4, 4M 4SI 4SIMX, 4P 4MP	–	–	–	89	–	–	189	–	–	349	–	-
HP 4L	–	–	59	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	-
HP 3SI	–	–	69	–	–	–	169	–	–	349	–	-
HP 4SI	–	–	–	89	–	–	175	–	–	349	–	-
HP Design Jet 600, 650	–	–	–	–	–	–	175	–	–	349	-	-
HP Deskjet 500 500C, 510, 550,560	–	55	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
HP Deskjet 1200C, 1200C/P	–	–	–	89	–	–	175	–	–	349	–	–
HP Paintjet XL300	109	–	–	–	–	–	289	–	–	489	837	-
IBM Laser 4019 4019E	–	–	–	–	–	169	–	–	–	–	–	–
IBM Laser 4029 4037	–	–	–	–	–	–	169	–	–	–	–	-
IBM Laser 4039 4079	–	–	–	99	–	–	169	–	–	350	–	-
NEC 90, 290	–	–	–	139	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	-
NEC 95, 97	–	–	–	99	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	-
Oki 400	–	–	–	89	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	-
Oki 400E, 400EX, 410E, 410EX	–	–	135	189	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	-
Oki 830, 840	–	–	–	109	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	-
Packard Bell PB 9500	–	–	–	139	–	–	227	–	–	–	–	-
Packard Bell 9815	–	–	–	180	–	–	299	–	–	–	–	-
Panasonic 4420/4450I	–	–	–	129	–	–	209	–	–	–	–	-
Panasonic 4410/4430	–	–	–	126	–	–	196	–	–	–	–	-
Panasonic 4450	–	–	99	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	-
Panasonic 4400/5400	–	–	Call	Call	–	–	Call	–	–	–	–	-
Panasonic 4440, 5410	–	–	109I	179I	–	–	Call	–	–	–	–	-
Sharp 9400, 9460 9600, 9700E	–	–	89	149	–	–	249	–	–	–	–	-
TI XL/PS17/PS35	–	–	55	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	-
TI Microwriter	–	–	79	159	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	-

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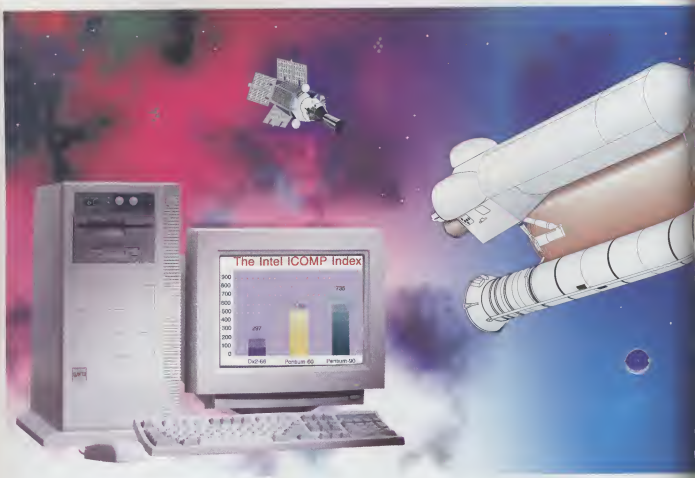

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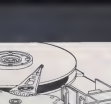

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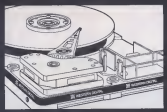

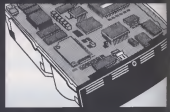

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340MB	IDE	WD2340A	12ms	3.5"/1H	449	489
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  nd microphone
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- year warranty

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X2/50	10.3" dual scan	200MB	$3649
X2/50	9.5" active matrix	340MB	$4719
2/50	9.5" active matrix	450MB	$5069
DX4/75	9.5" active matrix	520MB	$5339

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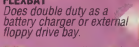

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- 3-year warranty

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- Resolution Enhancement Technology for smooth, crisp text and graphics
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Processor	Screen	Hard Drive	Price
486SX/33	Monochrome	120MB	$1699*
486SX/33	Active Color	120MB	$2779
486SX/33	Active Color	250MB	$3389
486DX2/50	Active Color	250MB	$4069

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- ▲ MS-DOS, UltraFont, Indeo video compression software, Windows for Workgroups 3.11

Model	Processor	Screen	Hard Drive	Price
T4700	486DX2/50	Dual scan color	200MB	$3127
T4700	486DX2/50	Dual scan color	320MB	$3337
T4700	486DX2/50	Active color	200MB	$4549
T4700	486DX2/50	Active color	320MB	$4699
T4800	486DX4/75	Active color	500MB	$5599

Lease for $114/mo.

T2400

- ▲ 486DX2/50 processor
- ▲ 2 PCMCIA slots (Type II, Type III)
- ▲ Integrated AccuPoint pointing device
- ▲ Optional sound card
- ▲ MS-DOS, Windows for Workgroups

Screen	Hard Drive	Price
Dual Scan Color	250MB	$2929*
Active Color	250MB	$3639
Active Color	320MB	$3799

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T2400

$2929*

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- ▲ MS-DOS, Windows 3.1
- ▲ Ballpoint mouse with Quickport
- ▲ Enhanced power management

Model	Processor	Screen	Hard Drive	Price
T1910	486SX/33	Monochrome	200MB	$1439
T1910	486SX/33	Dual scan color	200MB	$2039
T1950	486DX2/40	Dual scan color	200MB	$2289
T1950	486DX2/40	Active color	200MB	$2929
T1950	486DX2/40	Active color	320MB	$3199
T1960	486DX2/50	Dual scan color	200MB	$2379*
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Processor	RAM	Hard Drive	Price*
486SX/33	4MB	200MB	$1099
486DX2/50	4MB	200MB	$1249
486DX2/66	4MB	340MB	$1829
486DX2/66	4MB	525MB	$1969
486DX4/100	8MB	340MB	$2299
486DX4/100	8MB	525MB	$2469

*Compaq color monitors start at $259.99

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- ▲ 486SL/25 processor
- ▲ 4MB RAM expandable to 20MB
- ▲ 200MB hard drive
- ▲ Available with monochrome, dual scan color or active matrix color display
- ▲ MS-DOS 6.0, Windows 3.1, trackball

Screen	Price
Monochrome	$1899
Dual scan Color	$2319
Active matrix color	$2799

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Contura Aero

- ▲ Type II PCMCIA slot
- ▲ Integrated trackball
- ▲ Weighs only 3.5 lbs.(mono), 4.31 lbs. (color)
- ▲ MS-DOS 6.0, Windows 3.1

Processor	Display	Hard Drive	Price
486SX/25	Monochrome	84MB	$999*
486SX/25	Monochrome	170MB	$1419
486SX/33	Passive Color	170MB	$1989
486SX/33	Passive Color	250MB	$2269

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- ▲ 9.5" mono display
- ▲ 2 TYPE II or 1 Type III PCMCIA slots
- ▲ Untethered intelligent pen
- ▲ MS-DOS 6.0, Windows 3.1, InkWare NoteTaker,

Processor	RAM	Hard Drive	Price
486SL/25	4MB	120MB	$1229
486SL/25	4MB	250MB	$1769
486SL/33	4MB	250MB	$1299

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- ▲ TrackPoint II integrated pointing device
- ▲ IBM DOS 6.3, Windows 3.1, Lotus cc:Mail, Organizer, ScreenCam, Official Airline Guide FlightDisk, CoSessions Host, Prodigy, America Online, and FaxWorks 3.0
- ▲ Port Replicator and Docking Station available

Screen	Hard Drive	Price
Monochrome	170MB	$1939*
Monochrome	340MB	$2419
Dual Scan	170MB	$2519
Dual Scan	340MB	$2999
Active Color	170MB	$3389
Active Color	340MB	$3869

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- ▲ 4MB RAM exp. to 20MB
- ▲ 200MB hard drive
- ▲ 7.7" dual scan color
- ▲ Type II PCMCIA slot
- ▲ TrackPoint II integrated pointing device
- ▲ 3.5" external floppy drive
- ▲ Weighs only 3.8 lbs. (w/battery)
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UltraLite Versa S

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- A 9.5" screen
- A 2 Type II PCMCIA slots
- A Only 4.2lbs. (mono)

ocessor	Screen	Hard drive	Price
SSX/33	Mono	210MB	$1889*
SSX/33	Dual scan	210MB	$2319
SX/33	Active color	210MB	$3219
DX2/50	Active color	260MB	$3689

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Versa S $1889*

UltraLite Versa E

- ▲ 486 processor
- ▲ 4MB RAM, expandable to 20MB
- ▲ 2 Type II PCMCIA slots
- ▲ MS-DOS 6.2, Windows 3.1, built-in trackball
- ▲ Removable hard drive
- ▲ Removable screen
- ▲ Pen upgradable

Processor	Screen	Hard drive	Price
DX2/40	Active color	120MB	$3439*
DX2/40	Active color	250MB	$3849
DX2/50	Active color	209MB	$4199
DX2/50	Active color	340MB	$4599
DX4/75	Active color	340MB	$4999
DX4/75	Active color	500MB	$5249

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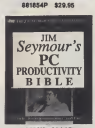

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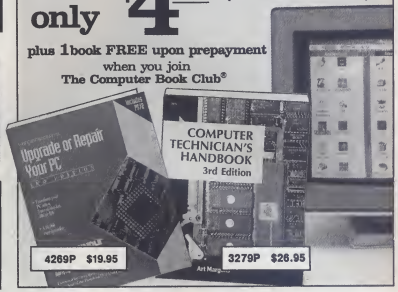

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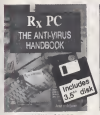

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1. **Where do you use your computer?** (Check one only)
   A. ☐ Home B. ☐ Business C. ☐ Both
2. **What kinds of computers do you use?** (Check all that apply)
   D. ☐ IBM/Compatible Laptop E. ☐ IBM/Compatible Desktop F. ☐ MAC
3. **Do you plan to buy any of the hardware or software mentioned below in the next three months?** (Check all that apply)

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H. ☐ MAC
I. ☐ Laptop
J. ☐ Printer
K. ☐ Monitor
L. ☐ Disk/Tape Back-up
M. ☐ Add-in Board
N. ☐ Modem
O. ☐ Input Device
P. ☐ Local Area Network

SOFTWARE
Q. ☐ Accounting
R. ☐ Spreadsheet
S. ☐ Personal Finance
T. ☐ Desktop Publishing
U. ☐ Word Processor
V. ☐ Database Manager
W. ☐ Graphics
X. ☐ Utility
Y. ☐ Communications
Z. ☐ Windows/Multi-tasking
1. ☐ Programming Language Compiler
2. ☐ Integrated/Multifunction
3. ☐ CAD

4. **From which of the following sources do you purchase personal computer products?** (Check all that apply)
   4. ☐ Specialty Computer Retail Stores
   5. ☐ Mail Order Firms
   6. ☐ Direct from Manufacturers
   7. ☐ Other

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631	632	633	634	635	636	637	638	639	640	641	642	643	644	645	
646	647	648	649	650	651	652	653	654	655	656	657	658	659	660	
661	662	663	664	665	666	667	668	669	670	671	672	673	674	675	
676	677	678	679	680	681	682	683	684	685	686	687	688	689	690	
691	692	693	694	695	696	697	698	699	700	701	702	703	704	705	
706	707	708	709	710	711	712	713	714	715	716	717	718	719	720	
721	722	723	724	725	726	727	728	729	730	731	732	733	734	735	
736	737	738	739	740	741	742	743	744	745	746	747	748	749	750	
751	752	753	754	755	756	757	758	759	760	761	762	763	764	765	
766	767	768	769	770	771	772	773	774	775	776	777	778	779	780	
781	782	783	784	785	786	787	788	789	790	791	792	793	794	795	
796	797	798	799	800	801	802	803	804	805	806	807	808	809	810	
811	812	813	814	815	816	817	818	819	820	821	822	823	824	825	
826	827	828	829	830	831	832	833	834	835	836	837	838	839	840	
841	842	843	844	845	846	847	848	849	850	851	852	853	854	855	
856	857	858	859	860	861	862	863	864	865	866	867	868	869	870	
871	872	873	874	875	876	877	878	879	880	881	882	883	884	885	
886	887	888	889	890	891	892	893	894	895	896	897	898	899	900	

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1. **Where do you use your computer?** (Check one only):
   A. ☐ Home B. ☐ Business C. ☐ Both
2. **What kinds of computers do you use?** (Check all that apply):
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3. **Do you plan to buy any of the hardware or software mentioned below in the next three months?** (Check all that apply):

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H. ☐ MAC
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J. ☐ Printer
K. ☐ Monitor
L. ☐ Disk/Tape Back-up
M. ☐ Add-in Board
N. ☐ Modem
O. ☐ Input Device
P. ☐ Local Area Network

SOFTWARE
Q. ☐ Accounting
R. ☐ Spreadsheet
S. ☐ Personal Finance
T. ☐ Desktop Publishing
U. ☐ Word Processor
V. ☐ Database Manager
W. ☐ Graphics
X. ☐ Utility
Y. ☐ Communications
Z. ☐ Windows/Multi-tasking
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3. ☐ CAD

4. **From which of the following sources do you purchase personal computer products?** (Check all that apply):
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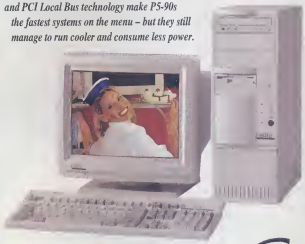

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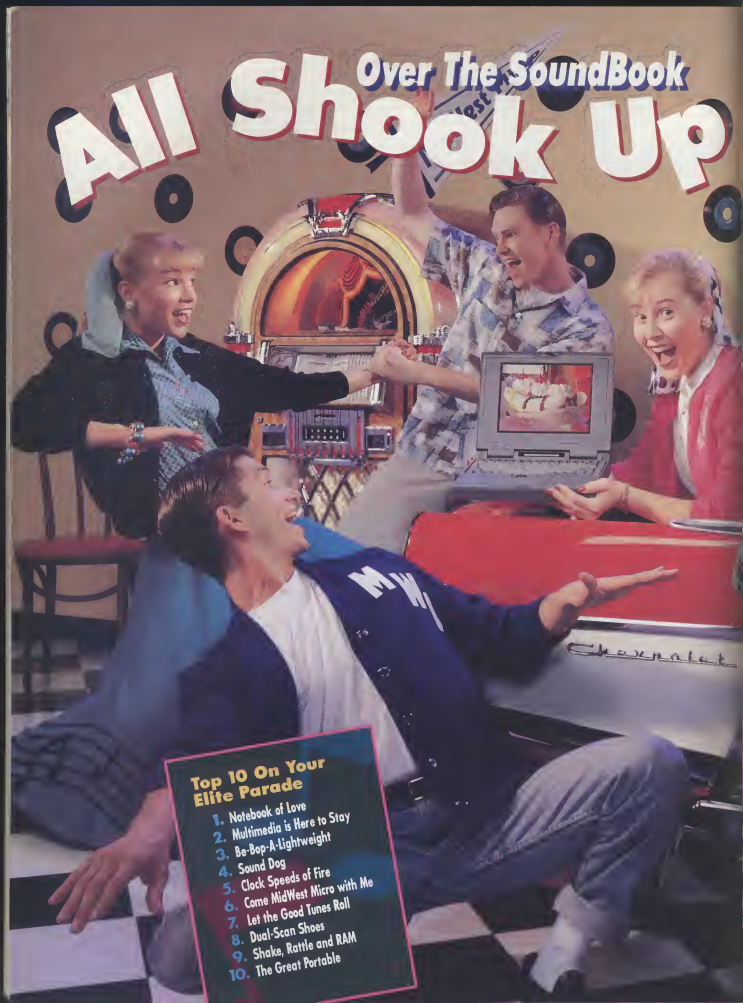
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The Elite SoundBook is also topping the charts with video performances in monochrome, dual-scan and active-matrix screens. For a little black and white with your rock and roll, try a monochrome SoundBook with crisp resolutions that score big on the Bandstand. Also a Billboard favorite, the large 10.3" dual-scan version uses affordable dual-scan color technology for less shadowing and sharper images. Choose an active-matrix screen, and you're sure to find your thrill with faster response times and a spectrum of vivid colors – from blues bluer than Blueberry Hill to purples fit for a flying people-eater. For audio and video in perfect harmony, call MidWest Micro and request your SoundBook today.

Not Quite Ready To Rock?

If you're looking for something with a little less volume, Elite's 486SX SubNote may be for you. Even though it can't play the top ten, this 3.9 lb. computer has plenty of other hit features such as a nickel-metal hydride battery, Advanced Power Management and your choice of dual-scan or monochrome screens.

intel inside

For portable computing that really rocks, check out the Elite SoundBook. Aside from its built-in microphone and speaker, this tiny vocalist features Local Bus video, a powerful nickel-metal hydride battery and plenty of configuration elements to choose from – including a 10.3" display, 520 Mb hard drive and processing speeds up to 100 MHz.

MidWest Micro

SYSTEMS
1-800-682-7248

PERIPHERALS
1-800-972-8822

AD#M09

Circle 273 on reader service card.

PENTIUM PCI SYSTEMS

P5-60 $1999
#008613
- Intel 60 MHz Pentium™ Processor
- 8 Mb RAM, 256 Kb Cache
- 428 Mb IDE Hard Drive
- PCI Fast IDE Interface
- PCI Local Bus Graphics with 1 Mb
- Double Speed CD-ROM Drive
- 3.5" Disk Drive
- 15" SVGA .28 NI Multi-Scan Color Monitor with Hitachi CRT
- 8-Bay Mini-Tower Case
- 4 ISA, 2 PCI & 1 PCI/ISA Slots
- Signature 101-Key Enhanced Keyboard
- Microsoft Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.22 and WFW 3.11
- MS Works Multimedia Edition 3.0
- The Real 3 Year Warranty

P5-66 $2499
#008614
- Intel 66 MHz Pentium Processor
- 8 Mb RAM, 256 Kb Cache
- 428 Mb IDE Hard Drive
- PCI Fast IDE Interface
- PCI Local Bus Graphics with 2 Mb
- Double Speed CD-ROM Drive
- Microsoft 3 Disk CD-ROM Software Library – Encarta™, Works™ & Money™
- 16-Bit Stereo Sound Card
- Altec Lansing Digital Quality Speakers
- Internal 14.4 S/R Fax Modem
- 3.5" Disk Drive
- 15" SVGA .28 NI Multi-Scan Color Monitor with Hitachi CRT
- 8-Bay Mini-Tower Case
- 4 ISA, 2 PCI & 1 PCI/ISA Slots
- Signature 101-Key Enhanced Keyboard
- Microsoft Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.22 and WFW 3.11
- MS Works Multimedia Edition 3.0
- The Real 3 Year Warranty

P5-66 $2799
#008616
- Intel 66 MHz Pentium Processor
- 16 Mb RAM, 256 Kb Cache
- 528 Mb IDE Hard Drive
- PCI Fast IDE Interface
- PCI Local Bus Graphics with 2 Mb
- Double Speed CD-ROM Drive
- Internal 14.4 S/R Fax Modem
- 3.5" Disk Drive
- 15" SVGA .28 NI Multi-Scan Color Monitor with Hitachi CRT
- 8-Bay Middle-Tower Case
- 4 ISA, 2 PCI & 1 PCI/ISA Slots
- Signature 101-Key Enhanced Keyboard
- Microsoft Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.22 and WFW 3.11
- MS Works Multimedia Edition 3.0
- The Real 3 Year Warranty

P5-90 $2999
#008617
- Intel 90 MHz Pentium Processor
- 16 Mb RAM, 256 Kb Cache
- 528 Mb IDE Hard Drive
- PCI Fast IDE Interface
- PCI Local Bus Graphics with 2 Mb
- Double Speed CD-ROM Drive
- Internal 14.4 S/R Fax Modem
- 3.5" Disk Drive
- 15" SVGA .28 NI Multi-Scan Color Monitor with Hitachi CRT
- 8-Bay Middle-Tower Case
- 4 ISA, 2 PCI & 1 PCI/ISA Slots
- Signature 101-Key Enhanced Keyboard
- Microsoft Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.22 and WFW 3.11
- MS Works Multimedia Edition 3.0
- The Real 3 Year Warranty

P5-60 $2399
#008615

P5-90 $3499
#008618
- Intel 90 MHz Pentium™ Processor
- 16 Mb RAM, 256 Kb Cache
- 528 Mb IDE Hard Drive
- PCI Fast IDE Interface
- PCI Local Bus Graphics with 2 Mb
- Double Speed CD-ROM Drive
- Internal 14.4 S/R Fax Modem
- 3.5" Disk Drive
- 17" .26 1600 x 1280 Exact Match Color Monitor
- 10-Bay Full-Tower Case
- 4 ISA, 2 PCI & 1 PCI/ISA Slots
- Signature 101-Key Enhanced Keyboard
- Microsoft Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.22 and WFW 3.11
- MS Works Multimedia Edition 3.0
- The Real 3 Year Warranty

P5-90 $3999
#008619

With 1 Gb SCSI HDD and Internal 28.8 S/R Fax Modem

VESA AND PCI SYSTEMS

DX2-66 $1399
#008606
- Intel 486DX2-66 Processor
- 4 Mb RAM, 128 Kb Cache
- 340 Mb IDE Hard Drive
- 32-Bit VESA Local Bus Graphics w/1 Mb
- 32-Bit VESA Local Bus IDE
- 9624 Internal S/R Fax Modem
- 3.5" Disk Drive
- 14" SVGA .28 NI Color Monitor with Hitachi CRT
- 8-Bay Mini-Tower Case
- 5 ISA & 3 VESA/ISA Slots
- 101-Key Enhanced Keyboard
- High-Resolution Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.22 and WFW 3.11
- EPA Energy Star Compliant
- MS Works For Windows 3.0
- The Real 3 Year Warranty

SX-33 $1199
#008601

DX-33 $1359
#008604

DX2-50 $1359
#008605

DX2-66 $1799
#008609
- Intel 486DX2-66 Processor
- 8 Mb RAM, 128 Kb Cache
- 340 Mb IDE Hard Drive
- 32-Bit VESA Local Bus Graphics w/1 Mb
- 32-Bit VESA Local Bus IDE
- Double Speed CD-ROM Drive
- Internal 14.4 S/R Fax Modem
- 3.5" Disk Drive
- 15" SVGA .28 NI Multi-Scan Color Monitor with Hitachi CRT
- 8-Bay Mini-Tower Case
- 5 ISA & 3 VESA/ISA Slots
- 101-Key Enhanced Keyboard
- High-Resolution Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.22 and WFW 3.11
- EPA Energy Star Compliant
- MS Works Multimedia Edition 3.0
- The Real 3 Year Warranty

DX-33 $1759
#008607

DX2-50 $1759
#008608

DX2-66 PCI $1799
#008610
- Intel 486DX2-66 Processor
- 8 Mb RAM, 256 Kb Cache
- 340 Mb IDE Hard Drive
- PCI Local Bus Graphics with 1 Mb
- Double Speed CD-ROM Drive
- 3.5" Disk Drive
- 14" SVGA .28 NI Color Monitor with Hitachi CRT
- 8-Bay Mini-Tower Case
- 3 ISA, 2 PCI & 1 PCI/ISA Slots
- Signature 101-Key Enhanced Keyboard
- Microsoft Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.22 and WFW 3.11
- EPA Energy Star Compliant
- MS Works Multimedia Edition 3.0
- The Real 3 Year Warranty

DX2-66 PCI $1999
#008612
- Intel 486DX2-66 Processor
- 8 Mb RAM, 256 Kb Cache
- 528 Mb IDE Hard Drive
- PCI Local Bus Graphics with 1 Mb
- Double Speed CD-ROM Drive
- 9624 Internal S/R Fax Modem
- 3.5" Disk Drive
- 15" SVGA .28 NI Multi-Scan Color Monitor with Hitachi CRT
- 8-Bay Mini-Tower Case
- 3 ISA, 2 PCI & 1 PCI/ISA Slots
- Signature 101-Key Enhanced Keyboard
- Microsoft Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.22 and WFW 3.11
- EPA Energy Star Compliant
- MS Works Multimedia Edition 3.0
- The Real 3 Year Warranty

DX-33 PCI $1979
#008611

EPA POLLUTION PREVENTER

SLIMLINE VALUE SYSTEMS

HOME PC $1499
#008601
- Intel 486SX-33 Processor
- 4 Mb RAM, 128 Kb Cache
- 340 Mb IDE Hard Drive
- 32-Bit Local Bus Graphics with 1 Mb
- 32-Bit Local Bus IDE
- Double Speed CD-ROM Drive
- Microsoft 3 Disk CD-ROM Software Library – Encarta™, Works™ & Money™
- 16-Bit Stereo Sound Card
- Digital Quality Speakers
- 9624 Internal S/R Fax Modem
- 3.5" Disk Drive
- 14" SVGA .28 NI Color Monitor with Hitachi CRT
- Slimline Case
- 4 ISA & 1 VESA/ISA Slots
- 101-Key Enhanced Keyboard
- Microsoft Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.22 and WFW 3.11
- EPA Energy Star Compliant
- MS Works Multimedia Edition 3.0
- The Real 3 Year Warranty

HOME PC $1999
#008602
- Intel 486DX2-66 Processor
- 8 Mb RAM, 128 Kb Cache
- 428 Mb IDE Hard Drive
- 32-Bit Local Bus Graphics with 1 Mb
- 32-Bit Local Bus IDE
- Double Speed CD-ROM Drive
- Microsoft 3 Disk CD-ROM Software Library – Encarta™, Works™ & Money™
- 16-Bit Stereo Sound Card
- Digital Quality Speakers
- 14.4 Internal S/R Fax Modem
- 3.5" Disk Drive
- 15" SVGA .28 NI Multi-Scan Color Monitor with Hitachi CRT
- Slimline Case
- 4 ISA & 1 VESA/ISA Slots
- 101-Key Enhanced Keyboard
- Microsoft Mouse
- MS-DOS 6.22 and WFW 3.11
- EPA Energy Star Compliant
- MS Works Multimedia Edition 3.0
- The Real 3 Year Warranty

Monitor Upgrade

Ask your sales representative how you can upgrade your monitor to a 15" or 17" Elite monitor.

14" to 15" $89
14" to 17" $419
15" to 17" $319

*All Systems with a CD-ROM include TestDrive CD Sof

ELITE NOTEBOOKS

Elite SoundBook

- Intel® 486, DX2 or DX4 Processor
- 4 Mb RAM (expands to 20 Mb)
- 9.5" Mono, 10.5" Dual Scan, or 9.5" Active Matrix VGA Display
- Local Bus Video with 1 Mb Video Display
- Business Audio Features Including: Built-in Microphone & Speaker External Jacks for Line In & Line Out
- 3.5" Built-in Disk Drive
- User Replaceable Hard Drive
- Two Type II/One Type III PCMCIA Slot
- Built-in Trackball
- NiMH Battery & AC Adapter
- Advanced Power Management with SMI
- One Parallel & One Serial Port
- External VGA & Keyboard Port
- MS-DOS 6.2 & WFW* 3.11
- Lotus Organizer*
- Microsoft Works For Windows 3.0
- Weight: Mono – 6.2 lbs. Color – 6.7 lbs.
- Carrying Case
- One Year Manufacturer's Warranty

intel inside

*** Ask your MidWest Micro sales representative about additional hard drive, screen and processor options.**

Dual Scan Color SoundBook

486SX-33 with 260 Mb HDD
#007328 **$1999**

486DX-33 with 260 Mb HDD
#007329 **$2199**

DX2-50 with 340 Mb HDD
#007330 **$2299**

DX2-66 with 520 Mb HDD
#007331 **$2499**

DX4-75 with 340 Mb HDD & 8 Mb of RAM
#007332 **$2799**

DX4-100 with 520 Mb HDD & 8 Mb of RAM
#007333 **$2999**

DX4-100 with 520 Mb HDD, 12 Mb of RAM, PCMCIA 14.4 Fax Modem & PCMCIA Ethernet Adapter
#008003 **$3499**

DX4-100 with 520 Mb HDD, 20 Mb of RAM, PCMCIA 14.4 Fax Modem & PCMCIA Ethernet Adapter
#008004 **$3999**

Monochrome SoundBook

486SX-33 with 260 Mb HDD
#007334 **$1499**

486DX-33 with 260 Mb HDD
#007335 **$1699**

DX2-50 with 340 Mb HDD
#007336 **$1799**

DX2-66 with 340 Mb HDD & 8 Mb of RAM
#008001 **$1999**

DX4-75 with 520 Mb HDD, 8 Mb of RAM & PCMCIA 14.4 Fax Modem
#008002 **$2499**

Active Matrix SoundBook

DX2-66 with 340 Mb HDD & 8 Mb of RAM
#007337 **$3499**

DX4-75 with 520 Mb HDD & 8 Mb of RAM
#007338 **$3799**

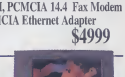
DX4-100 with 520 Mb HDD, 8 Mb of RAM & PCMCIA 9624 S/R Fax Modem
#007339 **$3999**

DX4-100 with 520 Mb HDD & 20 Mb of RAM
#008005 **$4499**

DX4-100 with 520 Mb HDD, 20 Mb of RAM, PCMCIA 14.4 Fax Modem & PCMCIA Ethernet Adapter
#008006 **$4999**

Options

4 Mb RAM Card	#005976	$219
8 Mb RAM Card	#005977	$469
16 Mb RAM Card	#005978	CALL
Car Adapter	#005979	$ 59
Mobile Max PCMCIA 105 Mb HDD	#004801	$342
PCMCIA 9624 Fax Modem	#001722	$135
PCMCIA 14.4 Fax Modem	#001812	$179
PCMCIA Ethernet Adapter	#001832	$159



Elite 486SX SubNote

- Intel 486SX SL-Enhanced Processor
- 4 Mb RAM (expands to 12 Mb)
- 9.5" Mono or Dual-Scan VGA Display
- Turbo Bus Accelerated Video
- 3.5" External Disk Drive
- User Replaceable Hard Drive
- One Type II PCMCIA Slot
- Built-in Trackball
- NiMH Battery & AC Adapter
- Advanced Power Management with SMM
- One Parallel & One Serial Port
- External VGA & Keyboard Port
- MS-DOS 6.2
- Weight: 3.9 lbs.
- Carrying Case
- One Year Manufacturer's Warranty

Monochrome SubNote

486SX-25 with 260 Mb HDD
#007342 **$1299**

486SX-25 with 340 Mb HDD & PCMCIA 9624 S/R Fax Modem
#007307 **$1499**

Dual Scan Color SubNote

486SX-33 with 260 Mb HDD, WFW 3.11 & Lotus Organizer
#007340 **$1899**

486SX-33 with 340 Mb HDD, WFW 3.11 & Lotus Organizer
#007341 **$1999**

486SX-33 with 520 Mb HDD, 8 Mb of RAM, WFW 3.11, Lotus Organizer & PCMCIA 14.4 S/R Fax Modem
#008007 **$2499**

Options

4 Mb RAM Card	#005970	$219
8 Mb RAM Card	#005971	$469
Car Adapter	#005972	$ 65
Mobile Max PCMCIA 105 Mb HDD	#004801	$342
PCMCIA 9624 Fax Modem	#001722	$135
PCMCIA 14.4 Fax Modem	#001812	$179
PCMCIA Ethernet Adapter	#001832	$159

Seagate

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AD#M09

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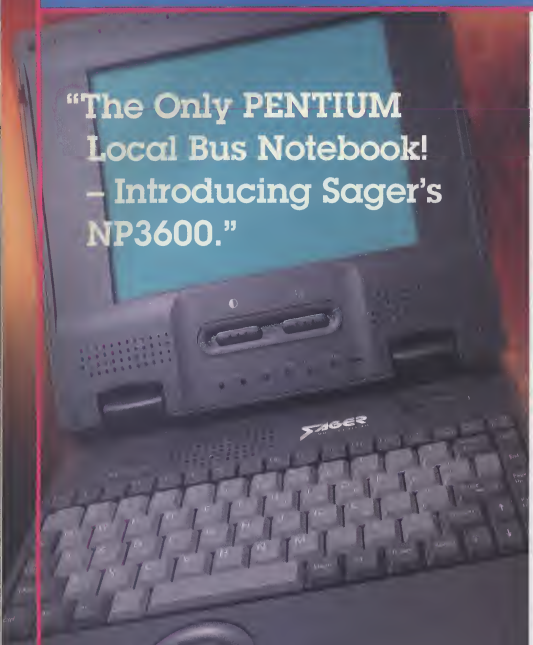
P O W E R F U L P

"The Only PENTIUM Local Bus Notebook! – Introducing Sager's NP3600."



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With more power than most desktops, these Sager notebooks were developed exclusively for performance-driven notebook users. Sager designed and built these systems with one goal – to give you the performance capabilities and features of the most powerful desktop, in a compact, lightweight notebook. These portable powerpacks feature Pentium performance, [illegible] upgradeability, both Local Bus video and Local Bus [illegible], audio and more. The result is powerful performance [illegible] than any other notebook.

PENTIUM NP3600 CONFIGURATIONS

- Intel Pentium™ 60/66MHz CPU
- 1MB Video RAM
- 32-bit VESA Local Bus Video with Windows Accelerator
- 32-bit Local Bus IDE
- Built-In Audio Chip, Microphone, & Speaker
- 8MB RAM Expandable to 40MB
- Removable 250MB Hard Drive (340, 520MB Optional)
- 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- 10.3" Dual Scan or 9.5" Active Matrix VGA Display, CRT, 1024x768 256 Colors
- Simultaneous CRT & LCD Operation
- Extra Large Built-In 25mm Trackball
- 1 Type II & 1 Type III PCMCIA Slots
- 46 Watt NiMH Battery
- 1 16C550 Compatible Serial Port
- 1 Parallel Port with ECP/EPP Support
- Ports for Ext. Keyboard, Ext VGA Monitor & 200 Pin Connector for Docking Station
- Jacks - 1 line in & 1 line out
- 86-Key Keyboard
- Microsoft DOS 6.22
- Carrying Bag & AC/Adapter
- Weight 8.1lbs (with Battery)
- 11.14"W x 10.31"D x 2.56"H
- Sager's Umbrella Protection Policy

NP3600 FEATURES

- Intel Pentium™ 64-bit performance
- Super Fast 32-bit VESA Local Bus Video with Windows Accelerator & 1MB Video RAM
- 32-bit Local Bus IDE, improved data transfer rate of up to 45%
- 1 PCMCIA Type III & 1 PCMCIA Type II Slots
- Built-In Audio Chip, Microphone, & Speaker (Now you can record, compress, store and playback voice, sound, and music to disk Soundblaster and Microsoft Windows Sound System compatible)
- VESA Local Bus Power when used with Optional VL-Bus Docking Station
- 46 Watt Extra Large NiMH Battery
- Extra Large Built-In 25mm Trackball
- Large Palm Rest Area for Easy Typing
- Flash ROM for BIOS Upgrade through software
- 2-Hour Quick Charge

NP3600 / NP7500 OPTIONS

VL-Bus Docking Station
Numeric keypad
Car Adapter
PCMCIA Cards (Fax/Modem, Ethernet LAN Adapter, SCSI Adapter & more)

486 NP7500 CONFIGURATIONS & FEATURES

- Intel SL enhanced CPU upgradeable to 486DX4 (486SX>DX>DX2>DX4)
- 1MB Video RAM
- Super Fast 32-bit VESA Local Bus Video with Windows Accelerator
- Super Fast 32-bit Local Bus IDE with improved data transfer rate of up to 45%
- Built-in Audio Chip, Microphone, & Speaker (Now you can record, compress, store and playback voice, sound, and music to disk
- Extra Large Capacity NiMH Battery – No Memory Effect and 40%-50% Longer Running/Operating Timespan
- Large 19mm Trackball Centered on Large Palm Rest Area for Easy Typing
- 2 PCMCIA Type I & II or 1 Type III IC Card Slot
- Flash ROM for BIOS Upgrade through software
- 4MB RAM expandable to 36MB
- Removeable 250MB Hard Drive (340, 520MB Optional) offers flexibility, upgradeability and security
- 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- 9.5" 640x480, VGA Display 256 Colors or 64 Gray Shades CRT 1024x768 256 Colors
- Simultaneous CRT & LCD Operation
- 180° LCD Display Angle Rotation
- Built-in System Management Mode (SMM)
- Ports for 1S, 1P, Ext. keyboard, Ext VGA monitor, & 200 Pin Connector for Docking Station
- Jacks - 1 line in & 1 line out
- 86-Key Keyboard
- Microsoft DOS 6.22
- Carrying Bag & AC/Adapter
- Weight 6.6lbs. (with Battery)
- 11.14"W x 9.48"D x 1.95"H
- 2-Hour Quick Charge
- VESA Local Bus Power when used with Optional VL-Bus Docking Station
- Sager's Umbrella Protection Policy

SAGER SYSTEMS	MONO	COLOR DUAL SCAN	COLOR ACTIVE MATRIX
NP3600/PENTIUM-60		$3195	$4195
NP3600/PENTIUM-66		$3345	$4345
NP7500/486SX-33	$1545	$2045	$2945
NP7500/486DX-33	$1725	$2225	$3125
NP7500/486DX2-66	$1775	$2275	$3175
NP7500/486DX4-100	$2095	$2595	$3495
NP700/486SX-25	$1295	$1795	$2645
NP700/486DX-33	$1475	$1975	$2825
NP700/486DX2-66	$1495	$1995	$2845

486 NP700 CONFIGURATIONS

- 1MB Video Ram
- 4MB RAM expandable to 16MB
- Removable 120MB Hard Drive (250, 340, 520MB Optional)
- 3.5" 1.44MB Floppy Drive
- 9.5" 640x480, VGA Display 256 Colors or 64 Gray Shades
- Large Built-In 16mm Trackball (Can be replaced with another module)
- PCMCIA Type I & II Slot
- Ports for 1S, 1P, Ext keyboard/keypad, VGA monitor & AT/Bus for expansion box
- 85-Key Keyboard
- Nickel Metal-Hydride battery
- Microsoft DOS 6.22
- Carrying Bag & AC/Adapter
- Weight 5.5lbs. with Battery
- 11.4"W x 8.6"D x 1.65"H
- Sager's Umbrella Protection Policy

NP700 FEATURES

- Module Pack Area (Optional) Fax/Modem, PS/2 Mouse+COM 2, Audio
- PCMCIA Slot
- Intel 486 Upgradeable CPU (486SX >486DX >486DX2)
- 180° LCD Display Angle Rotation
- 2-Hour Quick Charge
- NiMH Battery: No memory effect, Longer Battery Life
- External Battery Pack: (Optional) Doubles Running Hours Screws Into Bottom Back of Notebook Raising & Angling Keyboard for Easy Typing

NP700 OPTIONS

FAX/Modem Module
PS/2 Mouse + COM 2 Port Module
Audio Module
Internal/External Battery Pack
Numeric Keypad
Car Adapter
Expansion Box
PCMCIA Cards (Fax/Modem, Ethernet LAN Adapter, SCSI Adapter & more)

SAGER'S UMBRELLA PROTECTION POLICY

- **Two-Way 30-Day Money-Back Guarantee.** If the equipment does not work as promised, we'll pay your purchase price PLUS all shipping charges both ways!
- **48-hour Repair Promise** For the first 30 days, we'll repair or replace your computer within 48 hours (we will pay and pay) all shipping charges both ways!
- **72-hour Repair Promise.** For the rest of the 1 year warranty period, if it takes more than 72 hours to repair, you complete peace of mind, we will pay all shipping charges both ways
- **1-Year Parts and Labor Limited Warranty.**
- **Lifetime Toll-Free Technical Support.**

Umbrella Policy Applies to End Users in the United States of America and in Canada Only

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NOTEBOOK SYSTEMS STANDARD FEATURES

- 2 32-bit VESA Local Bus Slots
- 2 16-bit ISA Slots
- 1 3.5" HDD bay
- 1 CD-ROM or 5.25" HDD bay
- Ports for 2S, 1P, Ext. Keyboard, VGA Monitor
- Internal Speakers
- Integrated 110/220v, 120w power supply
- 14.5"W x 14.4"D x 4.9"H
- Large, Solid Platform for External Monitor

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OUR WORLD IS GRAND AND FULL OF COLOR.

PICTURE IT ON AN AMDEK MONITOR!

Whether your business is "at the office" or with your family at home, Amdek can help you and your family display the best of our world's grandeur and dazzling color. Amdek introduced the industry's first PC video monitor in 1978 and has been successfully providing display solutions with crisp, rich images at very competitive prices for over fifteen years. The AM/815E and AM/817E color Amdek monitors meet the stringent Swedish MPR-II low radiation emission guidelines and the VESA DPMS Energy Star power savings standard to help protect you and conserve our world's energy. Amdek "Direct" offers great prices, a 30-day "no questions asked" money back guarantee, toll-free technical support, and a standard one year warranty with available extended warranty programs. Amdek also has special programs for resellers, state and local government, and educational and corporate accounts. You will find that Amdek "Direct" can deliver the best combination of great prices, proven support, and feature rich monitors right to your door! Give us a call today.

Amdek Family of Display Products

	AM/432E	AM/732E	AM/732NI	AM/815E	AM/817E
Screen Size	14"FS VGA Mono	14" SVGA Color	14" SVGA Color	15"FS SVGA Color	17"FSHi-Res Color
Max Resolution	640x480	1024x768	1024x768NI	1280x1024NI	1600x1200NI
Max Refresh Rate	70 Hz	70 Hz	90 Hz	90 Hz	105 Hz
Horizontal Scan Freq.	31.5KHz	31.5, 35.2, 35.5KHz	30KHz-57KHz	30KHz-64KHz	24KHz-82KHz
Dot Pitch	N/A	.28mm	.28mm	.28mm	.26mm
110-240 VAC (Auto-sensing)	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
MPR II Compliant	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
Energy Star Compliant	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes
PIN Cushion Control	No	No	No	Yes	Yes
* Amdek "Direct" Price	$102	$249	$269	$379	$799

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AMDEK
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1MB 6450903 90
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8MA 118581001 480
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2MB 118689001 110
4MB 118690001 180
8MB 128877001 370
6SOCK 129150001 200

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2MB 18689001 110
4MB 118690001 180
8MB 128877001 375
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4MB PCPA2001U 220
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4MB PCPA2001U 225
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4MB PCPA20007U 220
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T4400SX
2MB PCPA2003U 180
4MB PCPA2004U 225
8MB PCPA2005U 420

T6400
2MB PCPA2003U 120
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2MB PC12PA8307U 110
4MB PC12P48308U 210

T3200SXC
2MB PC18PA8318U 110
4MB PC12PA8310U 210

T6100
2MB PC7P48301U 120

T8200
2MB PCPA8304U 110
8MB PCPA8313U 815

T5200C
2MB PCPA8304U 110
8MB PCPA8313U 516

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2MB 120
4MB 240

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4MBPC-PA2004U 225
8MBPC-PA2005U 425
16MBPC-PA2010U 905

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8MB 500987003 280
16MB 500987004 700
32MB 500987005 1300
4MB 500814004 180

BRAVO 286/8 /12
2MB 120
8MB 350
0 16MB 180

BRAVO 286/16
512KB 500510012 40
2MB 500510002 180
8MB 500824001 200

BRAVO 3800X/16
2MB 500510002 180
0 16MB 80

OKAVO 6000X/30
512kB 500510012 64
2MB 500510002 180
8MB 500824001 300

OKAVO 600/25
2MB 500780005 90
8MB 500780001 300

PREMIUM II 300/20
1MB 500780003 90
2MB 500780005 90
4MB 500780004 180
8MB 500780001 300
0 32MB 500819001 160

PREMIUM II 4A0/20
1MB 500780003 90
2MB 500780005 90
4MB 500780004 180
8MA 500780001 360
0-32MB 500819001 160

PREMIUM II 300/33
1MB 500780003 50
2MB 500780005 90
4MB 500780004 180
8MB 500780001 360
0 32MB 500818001 180

PREMIUM II 300 X/20
1MB 50078003 90
2MB 500780005 90
4MB 500780004 185
8MB 500780001 600
0 32MB 500818001 180

ADVARTARE 0000X/25
2MB 500862001 90
8MB 500862002 600

ADVARTADE PRO 6000X/33
2MB 500987001 180
4MB 500987002 170
16MB 500987004 700
32MB 500987005 1360

ADVARTARE PLUS 400DX/33 400DX2-00 -66
4MB 500510008 [illegible]
8MB 500824001 300

PKEMIUM II 400/3
1MA 500780003 90
2MB 500780005 90
4MB 500780004 180
8MB 500780001 410
0 32MB 500819001 180

PREMIUM II 4000X/20
1MB 500780003 90
2MB 500780005 90
4MB 500780004 160
8MB 500780001 410
0 32MB 500818001 150

PREMIUM 386SX/16
1MB 500780003 50
2MB 500780005 80
4MB 500780004 180
8MB 500780001 410
0 32MB 500818001 180

PREMIUM 4800X/33E
1MB 500780003 90
2MB 500780005 80
4MB 500780004 180
8MB 500780001 410
0 32MB 500818001 180

OFFICE ADVAR 380SX/20
2MB 500891001 180
8MB 500891002 600

OFFICE ADVAR 4000X/20
2MB 500891001 180
8MB 500861002 205

PREMIUM 6000X/33TE
1MB 500780003 90
2MB 500780005 90
4MB 500780004 180
8MB 500780001 410
0 32MB 500818001 180

PREMIUM 300
1MB 500510003 90
4MB 500510004 180

PKEMIUM 330C
1MB 500510007 90
4MB 500510008 300

PREMIUM 330/30TE
1MB 500780003 90
2MB 500780005 90
4MB 500780004 180
8MB 500780001 410
0 32MB 500816001 180

POWER EXEC EL
POWER EXEC 3/25SL, 25SL-C
2MB 500984004 180
4MB 500984001 210
6MB 500984002 300
16MB 500984003 1000

POWEK EXEC 4/25SL COLOR
4MB 501188001 220
16MB 501168003 1000

MARRATTER SMP SYSTEM
16MB 501143001 810

PREMMIA
4MB 501159001 180
8MB 501156002 370
16MB 501159003 710
32MB 501159005 1170
64MB 501156005 2000

PREMIUM SERVER SE 4/33
0 32MB 500819001 180
2MB 500780005 90
8MB 500780001 500

PREMIA LX P/60
8MB 500987003 380
16MB 501340002 740
32MB 500987005 1300

ADVARTAGE EXPLOKEK BRAVO R0
4MB 501255001 210

POWERREXEC 4/25SL SPECIAL EDITION POWEREXEC 4/33SL
4MB 500984001 180
16MB 500984003 1000

NEC

ULTRALITE 2A0F
1MB PC2221 $ 112
4MB PC2222 229

ULTRALITE SX/20
2MB PC4421 143
4MB PC4422 221

ULTRALITE SL/25
2MB PC4721 122
6MB PC4921 307

ULTRALITE SL/25P
2MB PC4721 122
6MB PC4921 337

ULTRALITE III
2MB PC4721 122
4MB PC4722 221
8MB PC4723 465

ULTRALITE SL/25C
2MB PC4721 122
4MB PC4722 221
6MB PC4723 465

PROSPEED 2A0
1MB PC2121 100
2MB PC2100 172
4MB PC2122 220

PROSPEED 386
2MB PC3121 180
8MB PC3122 643

PROSPEED 386SX
1MB PC2121 150
2MB PC2128 172
4MB PC2122 220

PROSPEED 6000X/20
1MB PC4021 100
4MB PC4322 220

PROSPEED 6000X 6000X/c
1MB OP4106204 70
4MB OP4106205 220

POWERMATE PORT SX
2MB APCH751X 183
8MB APCH753 784 443

POWERMATE PORT PLUS
1 3MB APCH750J 130
2 3MB 287
3MB [illegible]

POWERMATE SX
2MB APCH655 210
4 8MB APCH656 300
4MB 360

POWERMATE SX PLUS
1 2MB APCH656E 180
2MB 300
4-8MB 4PC882E 205
6MB 870

POWERMATE SX/16
2 8MB OP4106201 207
2MB OP4106103 140

POWERMATE SX/E0
2MB OP4108101 207
2 8MB OP4106201 237
2MB 200

POWERMATEE SX/16I SX/E0I /20VI /20C
2MB OP4108103 140
8MB OP4102101 443

POWERMATE 286C
POWERMATE 286 PLUS
1 3MB APCH250K 143
2 3MA 210
3MB 604

POWERMATE 386/E0
2MB APCH655E 801
8MB APCH656E 801

POWERMATE 386/20
2MB APCH655XE 263
8MB APCH65BX 800
6MB APCH657X 700

POWERMATE 386/25S
2MB OP4105201 200
4MB OP4105203 200
8MB OP4105202 872

POWERMATE 386/33E
2MB OP4105101 172

POWERMATE 386/33I
1MB OP4106204 70
4MB OP4106205 279
16MB OP4106208 800

POWERMATE 486/33I
2MB OP4108103 140
8MB OP4102101 443

POWERMATE 486/E0E
2MB OP4105101 172

POWERMATE EXPRESS 486/33E, /50E, 4000X/25E 4000X/25E
1MB OP4106204 70
4MB OP4106205 220
16MB OP4106208 600

POWERMATE EXPRESS TOWER 486/E5TE, /33TE, /50TE 4000X/EATE,
1MB OP4106204 70
4MB OP4106205 220
16MB OP4106208 295

POWERMATE EXPRESS/II SERIES 4330T 4060T
4MB OP41012002 220
16MB OP41012003 800
32MB 1810

POWERMATE EXPRESS/II P600T, P60L1
4MB OP41012002 220
8MB OP410030003 480
16MB OP41012003 810
32MB 1A32

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2MB 95023 180

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2MB 4032 187

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4MB OP41012002 280
16MB OP41012003 800

POWERMATE 286/12
2 16MB 180
4 16MB 299
8 16MB 480
2MB OP4108103 183

POWERMATE 320 READY 320
2MB 158082096090 180
8MB 158082182000 410

POWERMATE 420,433,460 READY 42E,433
1MB 802147606001A 70
4MB 158082232000 210
16MB 158082222000 840

POWERMATE SX/20
2MB OP4108100 240
2 8MB OP4108102 237
2MB OP4108103 297
2MB OP4108103 140

PORTARLE PLUS
2 16MB 180
4 16MB 3 290
8 16MB 440
1MB 90

ULTRALITER VERSA 20, 20C, 25, 25C 25CP 25P, 33 33C, 40E, 50E
4MB OP414001 (3 3 V) 250
8MB OP4104002 (3 3 V) 470

HARD DRIVES

Seagate

FACTORY NEW 1 5 YEAR WARRANTY

IDE				
130MB	ST3115A	15MS	3 5X1"	E16
128MB	ST9145AG	16MS	2 5"	260
260MB	ST3290A	16MS	3 5X1"	212
340MB	ST3381A	12MS	3 5"	240
209MB	ST9235AG	16MS	2 5"	345
452MB	ST3550A	12MS	3 5X1"	325
540MB	ST3655A	12MS	3 5"	365
SCSI				
452MB	ST3550N SCSI 2	12MS	3 5X1"	424
540MB	ST3655N SCSI-2	11MS	3 5X1"	448
340MB	ST3390N SCSI-2	12MS	3 5X1"	320
1 35GB	ST41600N	12MS	FH	1350
1 2GB	ST11200N SCSI-2	10MS	3 5"	796
1 2GB	ST31200N	9MS	3 5X1"	729
1 2GB	ST41200N	14MS	FH	859
2 1GB	ST42100N SCSI-2	14MS	FH	1300
2 1GB	ST42400 SCSI-2	11MS	FH	1450
3 6GB	ST43400N SCSI 2	10MS	FH	1879
1 7GB	ST11900N	9MS	3 5"	1058
1 7GB	ST11950N SCSI-2	6MS	3 5"	1477
2 1GB	ST12550N SCSI-2	8MS	3 5"	1650
2 2GB	ST12400N SCSI-2	12MS	3 5"	1395
4 1GB	ST15150N W	9MS	3 5"	CALL
8 0GB	ST410800N W	11MS	FH	CALL

CONNER

FACTORY NEW 1 YEAR WARRANTY

IDE				
170MB	CFA170A	17MS	3 5X1"	E179
210MB	CFS210A	12MS	3 5X1"	158
340MB	CFA340A	14MS	3 5X1"	286
420MB	CFS420A	14MS	3 5X1"	263
540MB	CFA540A	10MS	3 5X1"	355
SCSI				
170MB	CFA170S	13MS	3 5X1"	195
340MB	CFA340S	13MS	3 5X1"	260
540MB	CP30540 SCSI-2	10MS	3 5"	475
1 0GB	CP106 SCSI-2	10MS	3 5"	719

WESTERN DIGITAL

FACTORY NEW 3 YEAR WARRANTY

IDE				
212MB	WD1210	12MS	3 5X1	$205
250MB	WD2250	14MS	3 5X1"	218
270MB	WD1270	11MS	3 5X1"	CALL
340MB	WD2340	12MS	3 5X1"	246
420MB	WD2420	13MS	3 5X1"	274
540MB	WD2540	11MS	3 5X1"	372

MICROPOLIS

FACTORY NEW 5 YEAR WARRANTY

IDE				
1 0GB	2210A	10MS	3 5"	E735
1 75GB	2217A	10MS	3 5"	959
SCSI 2				
1 0GB	MC2210	10MS	3 5"	749
1 2GB	MC4110	9MS	3 5X1"	700
1 2GB	MC1598	15MS	FH	790
1 6GB	MC1908	10MS	FH	1099
1 75GB	MC2217	0MS	3 5"	940
2 0GB	MC1548	14MS	FH	1173
2 1GB	MC1928	11MS	3 5"	1349
3 6GB	MC1936	11MS	FH	1840
4 1GB	MC4410	8MS	3 5"	CALL
9 0GB	MC1991	11MS	FH	CALL

Quantum

FACTORY NEW - 2 YEAR WARRANTY ELS & LPS
5 YEAR WARRANTY ON P DRIVES
1 YEAR WARRANTY ON 2 5" DRIVES

CAPACITY	M/N	SPEED	SIZE	PRICE
127MB	ELS127A	17MS	3 5X1"	$180
170MB	LPS170A	17MS	3 5X1"	195
340MB	LPS340A	16MS	3 5X1"	330
540MB	LPS540A	10MS	3 5X1"	375
SCSI				
127MB	ELS127S	17ms	3 5X1"	180
170MB	LPS170S	17MS	3 5X1"	196
340MB	LPS340S	16MS	3 5X1"	285
540MB	LPS540S SCSI-2	10MS	3 5X1"	385
1 0GB	P1080S SCSI 2	10MS	3 5X1"	740
1 2GB	P1225S SCSI-2	10MS	3 5"	845
1 8GB	P1800S SCSI-2	10MS	3 5"	965

FUJITSU

FACTORY NEW – 5 YEAR WARRANTY

IDE				
520MB	M2624T	12MS	3 5"	309
SCSI				
1 2GB	M2694ESA	10MS	3 5"	745
2 1GB	M2654S	12MS	FH	1345

Maxtor

FACTORY NEW 2 YEAR WARRANTY

IDE				
130MB	7131A	14MS	3 5X1"	179
170MB	7171A	13MS	3 5X1"	168
273MB	7273A	12MS	3 5X1"	248
345MB	7345A	12MS	3 5"	245
540MB	7546A	10MS	3 5X1"	355
SCSI				
273MB	7273S	15MS	3 5X1	CALL
290MB	7290S	14MS	3 5X1"	280
345MB	7345S SCSI-2	12MS	3 5"	318
540MB	MXT540S	8MS	3 5X1"	450
1 2GB	MXT1240S SCSI-2	8MS	3 5"	1190

TOSHIBA

1 YEAR WARRANTY ON 2 5

[SUPER FAST SCSI 2]			
120MB	IDE MK1522FC	2 5"	$275
213MB	IDE MK2224FC	2 5"	375
213MB	SCSI MK2224FB	2 5"	300
340MB	IDE MK2326FC	2 5"	540
524MB	IDE MK2428FC	2 5"	775

HEWLETT PACKARD

FACTORY NEW 5 YEAR WARRANTY

SCSI				
1 0GB	C2247	10MS	3 5"	748
2 1GB	C2490	9 9MS	3 5"	1350

digital

FACTORY NEW FULL WARRANTY
DISK DRIVES FOR POWER USERS

SCSI II				
535MB	DSP3053L	8 5MS	3 5X1"	620
1 0GB	DSP3107L	9 5MS	3 5X1"	720
1 0GB	VP3107	8MS	3 5X1"	CALL
1 3GB	DSP3133L	8 5MS	3 5X1"	1040
1 6GB	DSP3160	8 5MS	3 5"	1065
2 1GB	DSP3210	9MS	3 5"	1370
2.2GB	VP3215	9MS	3 5X1"	CALL
3 5GB	DSP5350	12MS	FH	2205
4 0GB	DSP5400	12MS	FH	2452
4 3GB	SP3430	9MS	3 5"	CALL

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Buffer	128K	128K	2MB	2MB
Bits/No. of Colors	24-bit/16.8 M	24-bit/16.8 M	24-bit/16.8 M	30-bit/1.1 Billion
Single Light Source	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Scan Window Size	8.5 x 14	8.5 x 14	8.5 x 14	8.3 x 11.7
Transparency Adapter	$499	$499	$699	Included
Auto Document Feeder	$399	$399	$399	N/A
PRICE	$499	$649	$999	$2999
Software Included	Image Folio for Scanning Graphics (add *Xerox's* TextBridge 2.0 for Text Scanning for just $69)		Full Version Adobe PhotoShop 2.5 or Full Version Recollect	Full Version Adobe PhotoShop 2.5 & Full Version Kai's Power Tools
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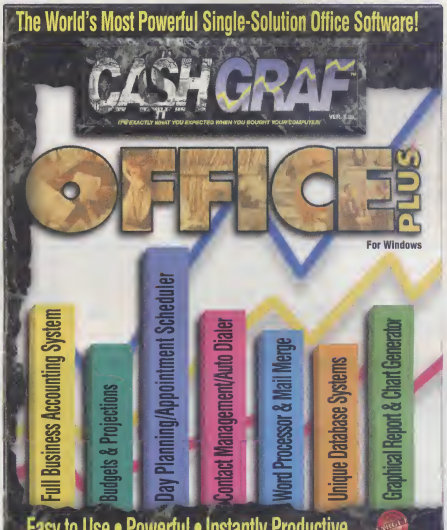

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CFA340A	340MB	12MS	IDE	$249
CFA420A	420MB	12MS	IDE	$288
CFA540A	540MB	12MS	IDE	$348
CFA610	810MB	12MS	IDE	$595
CFA1000A/S ..	**1060MB**	**10MS**	IDE/SCS	**$478**

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	4MB Module	112534 001	$170
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Deskpro 386/33/33l 486/25 33L,50L, Systempro	2MB	115144-001	$98
	8MB	116561-001	$378
	32MB	116568-001	$1458
Systempro, Deskpro 6 SKT EXP BRD W/2MB		116569-001	$288
Compaq "M"	2 64MB	129160-001	$168
Deskpro 286N 386N 386SX/20 20N Portable 486c Deskpro M			
Systempro LT Series 129160-001 Pro Signia	1MB	118688 001	$49
	2MB	118689 001	$84
	4MB	118690-001	$178
	8MB	128877-001	$348
Prolinea 3/25 & 25Z	2MB	141738 001	$88
	4MB	141742-001	$318
Prolinea 4/25s 4/33 4/50	4MB Module	141684-001	$178
	8MB Module	141685-001	$338
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	32MB	149147 001	$1524
DeskPro 5/60 5/66M	8MB	149911 001	$388
Prosignia PC Server 486/33/64	8MB	141685-001	$348
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	18MB	N/A	$648
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	4MB	92F9694	$148
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	2MB	30F5360	$80
PS/2 35SX LS 40SX 70 E61 061 121 Adpt Brd 6450609 34F3011, 34F3077 502 55SX 655SX P70 55LS 65LS X Station 120 & 130	1MB	6450603	$39
	2MB	6450604	$84
PS2 30 50Z, 55SX, 60, 65SX	2 8MB	1497259	$198
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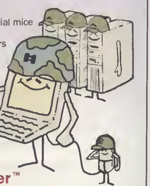

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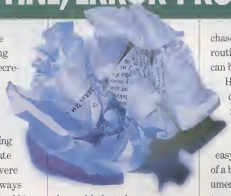

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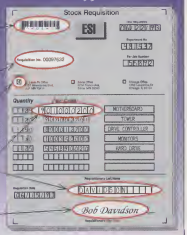

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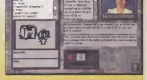

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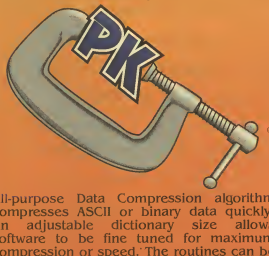

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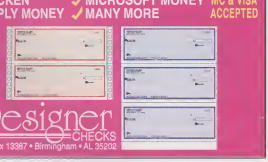

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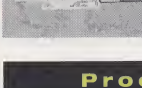

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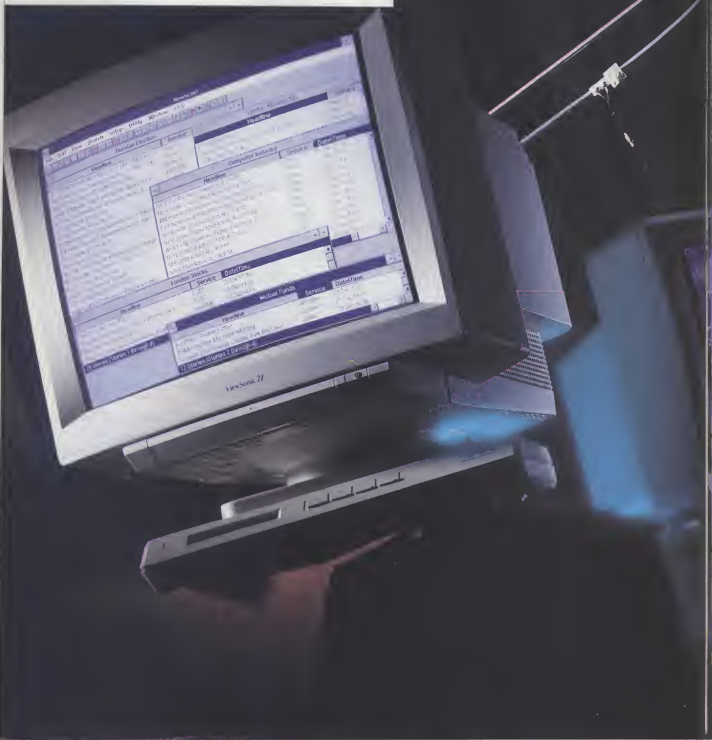

PHOTOGRAPH BY GEOFFREY NILSSON

All the News That Fits: Pick an infosource—Dow Jones, AP, CNN, whatever. Newscast for Windows' FM receiver (left) taps them all and sends out the facts via VIM or MAPI mail.

Newscast for Windows / Mainstream Data / (800) 299-2278 / $495 receiver, $995 software; subscription costs vary
Circle Reader Service No. 692

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Closed Caption Decoder / International Computers / (800) 992-9000 / $89
Circle Reader Service No. 692

WeatherBrief Plus / WeatherBank / (800) 201-4585 / $295
Circle Reader Service No. 693

Monitor the Facts: Crunch data and graphics faster with Intergraph's CAD-blasting TD-3 90MHz Pentium (center). And use a big-screen SVGA ViewSonic monitor to view them.

TD-3 Personal Work Station / Intergraph Corp. / (800) 345-4856 / $7,300
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ViewSonic 17 and 21 / ViewSonic Corp./ (800) 888-8583 / $1,045 and $1,995
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Mirage / Plantronics / (800) 544-4660 / $88
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CompuPhone / Integrated Technology / (800) 393-8889 / $159
Circle Reader Service No. 697

BY MATTHEW J. LAKE

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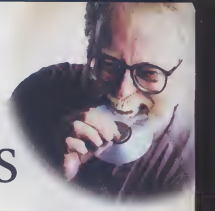

Round Magazines

Either you like magazines and hot new technology, or you're reading this column to torture yourself. High-tech–magazine lovers take note: You'll have plenty of opportunities to indulge yourselves with some of the new CD-ROM–based magazines we spun this month. If only you could read them on the plane.

This Is CompuServe: Made you look! Check out CIS on CD every month.

COMPUSERVECD ●●●●

CompuServe is good for a lot of things: finding quick answers, chatting with people you'd never meet in person, and downloading shareware. But the service is not good to look at, and it's poor territory for multimedia—until now, that is. CompuServeCD is a monthly disc that does offline all those things that CompuServe doesn't do well online.

The CD is like a monthly magazine with its own departments: home and leisure, entertainment, shopping, software tips, and so on. It's much of the same information you can get online, except that just about everything has Windows sound, photos, or video attached to it—from a track off Jimmy Buffet's new album to a catalog for ordering flowers. The best feature, however, is that you can use CompuServe's File Finder offline to select files for downloading, then have the CD call CompuServe to get the files you want.

The disc also comes with the latest version of CompuServe Information Manager for Windows (WinCIM) to access CompuServe through Windows, plus five bucks of connect time. If you're a CompuServe member, it's a no-brainer.

CompuServeCD / CompuServe / (800) 848-8199 / $7.95 per issue, including $5 usage credit
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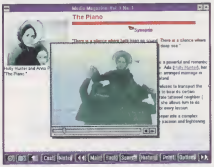
MEDIO MAGAZINE ●●

Here's another online magazine. Unlike CompuServeCD, Medio Magazine is mainly text, and mainly from the Associated Press newswire. The stories are plentiful, varied (from Kurt Cobain to Botticelli), and often accompanied by still photos. But the only place I found extensive multimedia was in promotional videos for current movies. And none of the textual information has the immediacy of CompuServe. For example, stock and mutual-fund listings are available, so you can select the ones you own and graph them. But the June premiere disc didn't go beyond April's prices, which isn't going to give an investing advantage on anyone without the benefit of a time machine.



Read My Clips: Medio's movie reviews pack more trailers than HBO.

OK, this was the magazine's first issue. The first issue of *PC Computing* looked pretty strange, too. We hope Medio will sacrifice some breadth for more attitude and a better use of the CD-ROM medium.

Medio Magazine / Medio Multimedia / (800) 788-3866 / $9.95 per issue, $59.95 per year
Circle No. 701 on Reader Service Card

GOVERNMENT SPENDING ●●●

Oh great, I thought, when I got Government Spending in the mail, more statistics for old men to complain about at family gatherings. But no, it's just the opposite. This is a CD for enterprising executives who want the feds to spend even more—in their direction.

A searchable database of all federal government contracts, Government Spending lets you find out just what your competitors are doing for the government, when their contracts come up for renewal, and exactly how much agencies are paying to whom. The CD is DOS based, and I've seen friendlier interfaces on a ticked-off gorilla. But the concentration required to devise complex searches is rewarded by the depth of material you can access quickly from the more than 425,000 records on the disc.

I can think of at least half a dozen old codgers I'm giving it to. Maybe they'll shut up if they get a first-class ticket to ride the gravy train, too.

Government Spending / CD Publishing / (800) 460-2371 / $99.95, $250 per year for quarterly updates
Circle No. 702 on Reader Service Card

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PHOTOGRAPH BY JAMES McGOON

What a Century! See the last 94 years through the eyes of *Time* magazine.

TIME ALMANAC OF THE 20TH CENTURY ○○○○

Ever doubted that this is one of the most exciting centuries in history? If so, get Time Almanac of the 20th Century. Through sound clips, video, photography, and text, this Windows program covers the aging century in a mixture of politics, war, technology, and people. Getting to the presentations and media clips from various approaches lets you amble through the century wherever your interests take you. The CD includes a game called News-Quest that looks like some dork educator's idea of how to trick pupils into learning history. It's nowhere near as interesting as the rest of the disc—or the last 90 years.

Time Almanac of the 20th Century / Compact Publishing / (800) 964-1518 / $69.95
Circle No. 703 on Reader Service Card

NATIONAL GEOGRAPHIC CD-ROM PICTURE ATLAS OF THE WORLD ○○

Whoa, it's raining magazine spin-offs this month. Here's an atlas on CD from the venerable master of foreign-land photography, *National Geographic*. But it didn't really know how to dress for the party. The disc is DOS-only—a little stodgy and uncomfortable in the company of flashier Windows multimedia. Even its maps—the other thing that *National Geographic* is well known for—look crude, and the interface for moving through the levels of information they contain is creaky. The photography and video clips are as great as you'd expect, but this photo album needs a new cover.

National Geographic CD-ROM Picture Atlas of the World / National Geographic Society / (800) 368-2728 / $89
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USA WARS: WORLD WAR II ○○

Want to play a really dumb-looking game? Forget the one in the Time Almanac. Head straight for USA Wars: World War II. This DOS and Windows game has a strained premise: Pick a game-show team from the Axis (Hitler, Mussolini, Rommel, and their cronies) and one from the Allies (Churchill, Roosevelt, Patton, and other guys in white hats).

The disc also has strained artistic skills: Its crude animations make all the major figures of the largest armed conflict of this century look like Beavis and Butt-head. As for the rest of the CD, a little multimedia, a lot of text, and a gallery of clumsily presented still photos go a long way—the further, the better. The copious photographs—which don't exclude the grim realities—are the best selling point for war buffs.

USA Wars: World War II / Compton's NewMedia / (800) 882-2208 / $39.95
Circle No. 705 on Reader Service Card

THE PRINT SHOP DELUXE CD ENSEMBLE ○○○

Broderbund has thrown its entire set of cult-success desktop publishing utilities onto a single disc, The Print Shop Deluxe CD Ensemble. These are not corporate presentation tools, but for the kids, home use, quick-and-dirty business cards, and that all-important Happy Labor Day card for grandma, there's nothing better around. The CD version brings together all of Print Shop's easy-to-use Windows programs, its vast collection of borders, clip art, and initial caps, and a utility (which, strangely enough, is DOS) for converting graphic formats. If you've liked any part of the original Print Shop programs, you'll love this ensemble.

The Print Shop Deluxe CD Ensemble / Broderbund Software / (800) 521-6263 / $80 (estimated street price)
Circle No. 706 on Reader Service Card

WRATH OF THE GODS ○○

Wrath of the Gods sounds like a sure bet—40 hours of video-laden role-playing in the classic myths. Stories based on ancient Greek mythology have been big box-office for centuries. This can't fail, right? Wrong. And it fails for the same reasons it sounds so intriguing. The game's video and high-resolution still photos are stiffer and more awkward than traditional game animation. When characters speak, for example, their bodies are still while only their mouths or heads move—just like the cheapest Hanna-Barbera cartoons. All in all, Wrath of the Gods illustrates the biggest myth in multimedia these days, that video clips automatically improve any software.

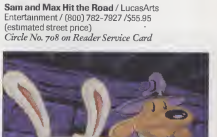
Wrath of the Gods / Luminaria / (415) 821-0536 / $59.95
Circle No. 707 on Reader Service Card

SAM AND MAX HIT THE ROAD ○○○○

One of the most sophisticated adult CD games features a dog in a cheap suit and a wisecracking rabbit with a reckless disregard for life—others' lives anyway. They're Sam and Max, freelance police—a couple o' mugs stuck in a tongue-in-cheek film noir cartoon that rings of sixties underground comics.

The cartoon detectives are hot on the trail of a carnival's bigfoot. Your mission: guide them, solve visual riddles, ask the right questions, pick up objects to use later, and find a place for Sam to go to the bathroom. On the way, play games within the game. Unlike most other game characters, Sam and Max deliver a witty script in a perfect deadpan. It's like *Naked Gun 33 ⅓* on disc. I'm a sucker for it.

Sam and Max Hit the Road / LucasArts Entertainment / (800) 782-7927 / $55.95 (estimated street price)
Circle No. 708 on Reader Service Card



Not for Kids: Sam and Max are a mix of R. Crumb and Dashiell Hammett.

PC Computing (ISSN 0899-1847) is published monthly by Ziff-Davis Publishing Company, a division of Ziff Communications Company, One Park Ave., New York, NY 10016. Second-class postage paid at New York, NY 10016 and at additional mailing offices. Postmaster: Send address changes to PC Computing, P.O. Box 58229, Boulder, CO 80322-8229. Printed in the U.S.A.Canada Post International Publications Mail Product (Canadian Distribution) Sales Agreement No. 239513, The Canadian GST registration number is R123669673.

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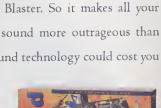

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PennJillette

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Twenty-three million people are hooked up to the Net and ten million were first online in the past year. (What are the odds of those two exact, neat, even, eight-digit numbers showing up in one factoid? It's amazing, like one in a million or something.) That means between the time this column was due and the time my editor got it on her hot little disk, 27,397 humans went cyber—Criminy! The barbarians have typed their way through the gates and they're throwing netiquette out the window. (How pompous can you afford to be after you've come up with ":)" *and* "netiquette"?)

Netiquette, schmetiquette (you'll want to read that aloud—it's more fun than you might think). If a newsgroup can't ridicule neophytes into playing by the unwritten rules, it doesn't take much to delete-without-reading inappropriate dilettante flames. It wastes time and it's way irritating, but it's better than running to daddy. We can't afford to give the government another electronic inch.

We need as much peaceful anarchy as we can keep. We can suffer bores, but we mustn't tolerate cops limiting or invading what we send and receive on the Net. I'm all for the Thin Blue Line between us and murderers, rapists, muggers, and thieves, but we can't have the nosy, control-freak, bureaucrat "cops" walking that unconstitutional and immoral communications beat.

History shows that when only the elite have something, the government doesn't give a good goddamn. There's been pornography and dangerous politics floating around the uppercrust since there was crust, with next to no censorship. Why bother? Censorship was Gutenberg's toxic by-product.

As soon as the press was up and running, fascist-wannabes were writing laws to control what was printed on it. The government didn't bother with unpleasant, nutty, fringe stuff when it was handwritten. If I had to scribe out all 903,102 (what are the chances of that number being on a random back page? Almost one in a million!) copies of each *PC Computing* column by hand, I might not think it was worth writing "goddamn" over and over just to enjoy a handful of goofy, angry letters.

Nosy, bureaucratic **FASCIST-WANNABES . . .**

CENSORSHIP *is Gutenberg's toxic by-product . . .*

The answer to evil speech is **MORE SPEECH.**

I hate longhand—call me arrogant—but I think it wouldn't take me *that* long to invent an "Uma Thurman" stamp. (I would never think of movable type though—never—I know my limitations.) Gutenberg gave books to the masses and government is about messing with the masses.

The powers that be are usually pretty cool with fancy modern dancers hopping around nude, but when men and women start dancing naked for the "No cover, no minimum, no buck knives, no colors" majority, the government is ready to protect us from what some of us are enjoying.

What I didn't realize before reading this great paper, "New Technology and the First Amendment—Breaking the Cycle of Repression," by Robert Corn-Revere, was that, as Robert says, "By adopting the First Amendment, the United States became the first nation to embrace the new technology as an essential component of its political system."

Our revolutionaries weren't just rebelling against the suppression that they had experienced, they were rejoicing in letting this *new technology* (maybe over 300 years old doesn't seem new to you, but this was before MTV—things went slower) be *part* of democracy. We must not get so excited about all the cool bells and whistles on our new technology that we forget that, at the end of the day, it's just communication and that's what our founding brain trust meant by "speech."

The Net is wild and free. It's a zillion personal and anonymous conversations going on all at once, unfettered by time or space. Yup, it can be disgusting, unpleasant, and just plain straight-ahead wrong, but that shouldn't be stopped. Justice Brandeis was right when he said the answer to "evil" speech is "more speech." (In 1928 he tried to nip the Clipper, voting against wiretapping.)

They caught us napping and we lost the battle for freedom on radio, movies, TV, and cable—we can't afford to lose it on the Net just because it's no longer elite.

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